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NO MAGIC OVERNIGHT

...As this where we came in? Is the performance ...which the curtain was rung up 26 years ago ...ginning all over again? Ghosts from Calvin's ...neva haunt the corridors of the Methodists' ...ll at Westminster. The first Assembly of ...e United Nations is burdened with memories ...a similar experiment which failed. There have ...en eloquent speeches; that by Mr. Attlee ...as particularly moving in its single-minded ...ncerity. The debates and the voting have ...evealed a healthy atmosphere of frank speaking ...d of independence among the delegations of ...e minor Powers. The function of a Parliament ... to dramatise in debate the clash of interests ...d opinions outside. So far, however, the ...b...cts of dispute, solved in two cases by graceful ...ith...rawals on the part of Canada and New ...ea...nd, have not involved any cardinal points ... principle. Eloquence counts for little if, ... Mr. Byrnes suggests, Powers are never ...pe...ted to subject their interests to the test of ...ting. History reminds us that the oratory ...M. Briand was accorded by another Assembly ...plause as vigorous as that won in this by Mr. ...rnes, and that in the old League the minor ...owers were able to exercise, in expressing their ...inions and in casting their votes, a freedom ...dly ineffectual when it came to vital issues.

In contrast to the old League, the new Organisa...n is really world-wide; its focus is no longer ... Europe; and from the conception, unreal ... it was, of the equality of all State Members, ...e pendulum has swung far in the direction of ...aking power the measure of responsibility. ...his at least is more honest; and it may work ...tter—always provided that it does not convert ...e Assembly and the Security Council alike ...to a mechanism for endorsing the decisions of ... omnipotent Triumvirate. Mr. Byrnes gave ... warning against "overloading the Organisa...n in its infancy," or expecting a World Parlia...ent to be built by "magic overnight." If he ...ea...t that this month's Assembly would probably ...wrecked if an attempt were made to use the ...thod of Assembly vote to settle such explosive ...u...s as the policies of the various Powers in relation to Persia, Turkey, Germany or Indonesia, he was probably right. On the other hand, if the Assembly acquires the habit of postponement and plays the part of a docile spectator of Big Power politics, taking cognisance only of such secondary questions as the Big Three choose to refer to it, its existence will be futile. UNO cannot permanently escape this dilemma. Persia is now the chief issue in everyone's mind. As the Government of Persia, which is still an occupied territory until March 2nd, is tottering and the Security Council is not yet formally constituted, decision here may be evaded or postponed without fatal results. But the truth is that if the Assembly has no power and the great States reach a deadlock in the Security Council, then UNO is still-born.

Already, in the moves and counter-moves of the preliminary proceedings—the formation of committees and the election of officers—there is visible, as between the U.S.S.R. and Britain, a divergence of approach to the question of the Organisation's functions. Faithful to their thesis that the value of the United Nations depends wholly on agreement between the Major Powers, the Russians would like to see the Assembly given a role of minor importance; in any event they press for prior consultations between the Big Three before debates begin. This Mr. Bevin has resisted as "undemocratic"; but Mr. Attlee's declaration that UNO "must become the overriding factor in foreign policy" has found significantly little support either by Mr. Gromyko or by Mr. Byrnes, whose insistence on the retention of an American veto on any recommendations of the Atomic Commission derives from a conception of sovereignty as rigid as that of the Russians. Trusteeship in the Pacific islands may be as much an issue as Persia.

It would be idle to pretend that we are within sight of having in the Security Council an embryo of the Cabinet of the Parliament of Man. Hope for the future may find perhaps its most solid foundation in the fact that the Social and Economic Council now constituted has before it a vast task of reconstruction and planned development which will demand and should evoke practical collaboration between Powers great and small. From such collaboration there may develop gradual recognition of the fact that the old League failed because it did not succeed in so organising the life of nations, in the economic and social fields, that the elements of want and disorder which lie at the root of international disputes were dealt with in time. Not until the resulting tensions involved a threat to peace did they come within Geneva's purview. This time, let us hope, the United Nations will do better, but we should be more confident of the outcome if the delegations comprising the Assembly were not made up of nominees of Governments. In the cases of America, France, Czechoslovakia, Norway and Denmark the delegations contain, indeed, members of different political groups, but even these "mixed" delegations speak and act as national units in the Assembly. All the voting is national; no mechanism exists by which, for example, Social Democrats could vote together on the basis of a common political philosophy. The 51 flags which hang to-day round the Central Hall are a symbol. The various delegations speak for the State whose flag is theirs. The accent is therefore bound still to be on the archaic notion of national sovereignty.

At its Congress in Paris last September the World Federation of Trade Unions rightly emphasised that the best guarantee of stable peace lies in co-operation between "peoples" as well as Governments. It will be a step forward if the Assembly, modifying the San Francisco decision, now grants a W.F.T.U. delegation the right to participate, at least in a consultative and advisory capacity, in UNO's work. But we should like to see a more fundamental change in the Assembly's composition.

If delegates represented different political parties and could speak and vote, on occasion, as party, instead of as national representatives, there might be more confusion in UNO, but there would be a better chance of forming new international groupings with common programmes which cut across the frontiers of nationalism.

"Cease Fire" in China

At last Chinese politics move at an un-Chinese speed. Every move is related to the central theme of Kuomintang-Communist relations which are themselves largely a reflection of American and Soviet policy in the Far East. The visit of Chiang Kai-shek's son to Moscow was scarcely a social call; the recognition by the Chinese Government of the independence of the Mongolian People's Republic should make for better relations with the U.S.S.R., and the "cease fire" agreement signed on Thursday last should facilitate a working agreement between the Kuomintang and the Communists. Until the very last moment, it seemed as though the Political Consultative Council would start its proceedings in an atmosphere of civil war. The Communists agreed to the Kuomintang proposals concerning troop movements south of the Yangtse and in Manchuria, but firmly opposed the intention of Chungking to occupy Tulim in Chahar and Chinfeng in Jehol. When this point was conceded at the last moment by the Chinese Government, the truce was signed. The Military Sub-committee to discuss the reorganisation of the Eighteenth Group (Communist) Army will hold its first meeting shortly. American, Communist and Chinese Government commissioners are already in Peking to carry through the terms of the cease-fire declaration. Parallel with these military developments, the Chinese Government has announced political plans for reorganising the State Council, with a number of seats for non-Kuomintang members. This plan, which has been accepted by the Communists as the basis of discussion, is now before the Peoples' Political Council; it represents a welcome move towards the restoration of that political unity in China without which she cannot rebuild her war-ravaged country.

The Position in Greece

Whether honest elections can really be held in Greece on March 31st, the appointed day, seems highly doubtful. Economically the position is shocking. In spite of large UNRRA supplies, a considerable part of the population exists this winter on bread and water. The black market flourishes and the drachma collapses. A Greek Government economic mission in this country finds the British Treasury slow to rescue their currency. In the political field, M. Venizelos, in doubtful loyalty to M. Sophoulis, the Premier and his party leader, has carried part of the small Liberal party in a pact with the Populists, dividing Greece more sharply into Right and Left *blocs*. Between these the utmost bitterness remains. The violence of EAM has been revenged during British occupation by the murder of at least 700 Leftists, while many thousands of EAM supporters are said still to be on the run in the mountains. The police, trained by Sir Charles Wickham, have restored order with exemplary fairness in the towns, but Right-wing terror continues in many villages. The prisons are still crowded and the excellent terms of the Amnesty are evaded in administration. Since murder is now the only charge on which political prisoners may be kept in gaol, almost all political prisoners are accused of murder, sometimes as many as fifty for a single alleged killing. The terms of the Amnesty excluded killing of enemies, or of Greek quislings, from the category of murder. But the judges appointed to sift these charges find technical difficulties, and out of 1,600 political prisoners in Athens we are told that less than 150 have so far been released. The electoral lists are admittedly corrupt, and Mr. Bevin's well-intentioned scheme, by which British experts are to supervise the elections, is only too likely, as honest supporters of the Greek Government admit, to lead to Britain sanctioning frauds which no foreigner could detect. These are not the conditions of fair and free elections. They are the aftermath of war, civil war, aborted revolution and foreign intervention. Mr. Hector MacNeil made a good start in Greece; he will have again to act swiftly and strongly if his settlement is in practice to be honoured.

Anders and His Army

Parliament, we suggest, must elucidate the relationship between the British War Office and the army of General Anders in Italy. These Polish forces, over 100,000 strong and officered (at least, in the higher ranks) by anti-Russian irreconcilables, are strung along the east coast of Italy from Ancona northward to Venezia. According to the Special Correspondent of the *Observer*, they are now carrying out large-scale exercises round Ancona, making themselves "ready for war against Russia in the Spring." From Italy's point of view it is highly undesirable that corn production in the Ancona Marches should be impeded by military manœuvres; and, in view of the approaching elections, the presence of these considerable forces under passionately anti-Communist officers is politically objectionable. But, from a wider point of view, the existence of General Anders' army is an even graver embarrassment. Without attaching too much importance to wild talk by Polish officers of war against the Soviet Union, we should like to be told the purpose for which these troops are still mobilised. Even if many of them refuse to return to Poland, is there any valid reason why they should be kept under arms? The cost of maintaining this army is a strange bill for the British taxpayer to meet at the behest of a Labour Government.

Balkan Deadlock

Coupled with reports of the chauvinistic attitude of this emigré Polish army in Italy, there is news that sixteen Polish officers are to be tried this month in Warsaw on charges of conspiring to overthrow the Polish Government. The allegation is that they were acting on the orders of General Anders, and that some of them had been dropped in Poland by parachute with large sums of foreign currency. There is good reason to believe that wireless contact, maintained with the Polish "Home Army" during the war, still continues between General Anders and Fascists in Poland. Whether plans are actually afoot for counter-revolutionary attempts in Eastern Europe, we have no means of knowing; but the mere suspicion that the British authorities are conniving at such activities is calculated to be a fatal bar to better Anglo-Russian understanding over the composition of governments in the Balkans. Already it is clear that the task of "broadening" the Rumanian and Bulgarian governments in accordance with the Moscow agreement is not going smoothly. The Groza Government in Bucharest has, indeed, been augmented by representatives of the Liberal and National Peasant Parties. But Mr. Maniu's representative has joined the Government with the reservation that his Party will accept no responsibility for its actions. Whether "broadening" on such terms will satisfy Washington and London that the Rumanian Government now merits recognition remains to be seen. As for Bulgaria, the Opposition members who were invited to join the Cabinet apparently interpreted the Moscow agreement as giving them the right to demand new elections, a repudiation of the Government's past policies, and the surrender by the Communists of the Ministry of the Interior. These demands the Government has, naturally enough, rejected; and Mr. Vyshinsky, who returned to Moscow to report on the situation, has apparently endorsed the Government's stand.

Bread and Politics

With another general election scheduled for May, in every discussion of French economic difficulties and scarcities each party seeks to shift responsibility on to its rivals and to claim that its own policy, forcibly implemented, would have forestalled the crisis of the moment. In the acrimonious debate over the re-introduction of bread-rationing, the Socialists have again suffered. They held the portfolio of Food when the premature decision to lift rationing was taken; and another Socialist, M. Tanguy-Prigent, has had to incur the odium of imposing it again. The Communists, in contrast, come out well from this unhappy affair. They were the only group to vote for the maintenance of rationing last autumn, and their present demand for a reduction of arrations and an increased allocation for manual workers—backed by the trade unions and other Left groups—has been conceded at the Cabinet meeting held after M. de Gaulle's return from holiday. At the same time, the striking butchers have been given an ultimatum to re-open their shops and to accept a limited increase in the profit margin on meat. The Cabinet, however, rejected the Food Minister's demand that black-marketeers should be liable to the death penalty. More drastic action to "purge" French economic activities is likely to follow the disclosure of the insurance scandal by M. Billoux, Communist Minister of National Economy. His charges against the insurance companies—released, it seems, somewhat earlier than intended in order to strengthen Communist criticism in the bread crisis—are so framed that the trusts and finance companies are also implicated. If it is true that the insurance companies have been covering black-market risks on an immense scale, a thorough overhaul of the police as well as of the companies' affairs would seem necessary. Naturally, the Left will not miss the opportunity to call for the nationalisation of insurance—a point already included in the programme of the *Délégation des Gauches*. But the political manœuvres which now surround any issue of this kind in France are due also to the basic incompatibility of the Coalition. No party is enthusiastic about Cabinet decisions, which more and more, have become a list of unsatisfying compromises.

Socialism and Foreign Investors

Poland has followed Czechoslovakia in enacting a programme of far-reaching nationalisation of industries. The National Council in Warsaw passed last week a Bill bringing under State ownership all transport, mines, oil wells and industrial undertakings employing more than fifty persons, with the exception of building and enterprises run by municipalities and co-operative societies. New enterprises are excluded; and Allied investors who had a considerable stake before the war in Polish oil, electrical and chemical undertakings are to receive compensation. This programme is by no means to the liking of Wall Street. It is reported from Washington that the proposed U.S. loan of $500 millions to Poland may on this account be "jeopardised." From Prague it is officially announced that foreign shareholders affected by the recent nationalisation decrees are to receive treatment as favourable as Czechoslovak citizens. According to reports published in Prague, Unilevers are claiming the immense sum of £10 millions as compensation for the nationalisation of the Schich soap and margarine works, and the British Government is understood to be demanding that payment of compensation to British interests must be made in sterling. Such a demand would seem to conflict with the policy of increasing British export trade, since Czechoslovakia could only acquire the sterling by reducing her purchases of goods from Britain and competing successfully with Britain for exports to the sterling area. Apart from this consideration, however, the British attitude has caused resentment in Czechoslovakia, just as bitter feelings have been aroused in Warsaw by reports that Britain is demanding £5 millions in gold—half the total gold holding of Poland—in settlement of Poland's indebtedness for material assistance during the war. If the impression is created that there is a joint Anglo-American front actively antagonistic to the Socialist government

of Central Europe, the result is likely to be an additional tier to the Chinese Wall which already runs across Europe from Stettin to Trieste.

The F.B.I. on the National Finances

The Federation of British Industries has issued a statement on national financial policy in which, in addition to the familiar demand for speedy abolition of E.P.T. and National Defence Contribution, it makes certain proposals regarding the finance and accounting of nationalised industries and services. There will be general assent among progressive students of national finance to the proposition that the time has come for the State to separate its capital and revenue accounts, and that separate accounts should be rendered of the financial operations of publicly run industries and services. To these proposals the F.B.I. adds that such services should make a proper contribution to the national revenue, as otherwise every extension of public ownership will narrow the basis of taxation. It is not quite clear what this means. Incomes accruing from public services to individuals will presumably be taxed in the ordinary way, and this seems to leave only the question whether the reserved profits of nationalised industries ought to be subject to tax. As these profits belong to the State in any case, what is the use of taxing them? The only practical meaning that can be given to the proposal is that public services should not be allowed to reduce prices when they are running so as to show a surplus. But this, surely, is a question to be decided, not in general terms, but on the merits of each case. As for the F.B.I.'s further proposition that total taxation ought to be reduced by cutting down "non-productive expenditure," what is this but the old, familiar attack on the education and other social service estimates—a threat of the "Geddes axe" that was wielded so disastrously after the last war? By all means let us cut all *unnecessary* expenditure; but "non-productive" is by no means synonymous with "unnecessary."

Man-power and Wages

It is increasingly evident that the problem of finding inducements to attract labour into unpopular occupations, for which recruitment can no longer be effected by direction, is far from solved. Little so far has been done to make good shortage of man-power in some industries ancillary to building, notably brick-making plants where working conditions (particularly in the winter) are generally unpleasant and local amenities for the workers are few. Production of woollen textiles is also being hampered by shortage of spinners and weavers. Here the trouble is partly antiquated mills and partly low wages. In agriculture it is equally clear that the 70s. minimum will be quite ineffective in maintaining an adequate force of workers on the land when the Control of Engagement Order is lifted, as ultimately it must be. As it is, shortage of land workers would already be acute were it not for the employment (which cannot be permanent) of German prisoners-of-war. In these circumstances, we are nonplussed by the Government decision to call up 5,000 agricultural workers for the Services. Farmers are promised that an additional 8,000 agricultural workers will shortly be released under Class B, but experience of Class B releases suggests that this increment is uncertain. From every point of view it is axiomatic, not only that labour must not be diverted unproductively from essential industries, but that we should do everything possible to maintain at as high a level as possible the total population gainfully employed. This consideration should surely lead to a reversal of the decision, announced by the London Passenger Transport Board, to dispense with the services of all women conductors even if they are anxious to continue in this employment.

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LETTER TO AN AMERICAN LIBERAL

DEAR MAX LERNER,—

I ENJOYED your article in *P.M.* on General Morgan. I usually enjoy your writing, and on this occasion you fairly let yourself go. It must have been fun to compare the General with Goebbels and to represent him as a Yahoo who regretted that Hitler had not succeeded in exterminating all the Jews. It so happens, as this journal said last week, that the General was guilty of indiscretion, not of Yahooism or anti-Semitism. How did so experienced a journalist as yourself come to make so violent an outburst on the basis of ambiguous phrases quoted out of their context? Surely you cannot have become one of those American Liberals who join forces with Colonel MacCormick whenever there is a chance of putting Britain in the dock.

Please understand that, this outburst aside, I have no quarrel with you or *P.M.*, which is an outstanding example of a good paper fighting for good causes against long odds. You yourself have fought valiantly on the right side; you did your best to persuade Americans that it was "later than they thought." Nor do you stand alone among American Liberals. I recognise friends and allies every week in the *New Republic* and *Nation*. But some of the tendencies of American Liberalism are disturbing. American criticism seems to me oddly subjective, as if it arose less from the facts criticised than from some internal conflict. There is still a strong Puritan strain in the United States. Perhaps the effect of living in so much comfort in a world so near starvation is to generate a sense of guilt, coupled with a fear of the wrath to come. And then, I cannot help thinking that the collapse of Germany and Japan has left you without an external object of vituperation. The Devil has his uses, and those who are not prepared to fit the U.S.S.R. into the diabolic role find the British Empire the most satisfying substitute.

Let me pursue the example of Palestine. After the last war the British, partly for reasons of strategic interest, and partly from genuinely humanitarian motives, offered the Jews a national home in Palestine. They were attacked for Imperialism in doing so, just as they are attacked now for Imperialism because they don't suddenly promise to put several million Jews into an Arab country in less than no time. I think the British might have done more to fulfil their promise if they had taken a more definite line at an earlier stage, but American attacks seem really to ignore the existence of the Arabs altogether. It would have been better, in my view, if the Jews had been content to leaven the cultures of other nations, where they have always played a most distinguished role. However, I well understand why they want a home of their own, and why, after the unique tragedy of the last years, with only a remnant saved from Hitler's slaughter-houses, you are impatient to see them in a land which is not associated with these terrible events. I agree with you that many of them find little hospitality in Europe, mainly (I think) because the Nazis have disposed of all their property to other people, many of whom paid for it in the legal way, and naturally do not want to give it up. But do you know how many of these unfortunate survivors of a tortured race really want to go to Palestine? Is this small and disputed country surrounded by enemies really attractive to most European Jews? I don't know. I am hoping that the Anglo-American Commission will tell me. The only definite statement I've seen is that many of them would prefer to stay in Europe if we can design tolerable conditions for them there, while the majority of those who want to emigrate would prefer America to Palestine.

Whatever happens in Palestine, the number of Jews who can go there is limited, and I can't help wondering why you do not advocate that some of the Jewish refugees who arrive in the crowded and hungry British Zone should be taken over by the Americans, whose Zone is little devastated and comparatively well-fed. And why should not many of them emigrate to the United States, if only on the German quota, which I presume has not been taken up during the war? You could write a magnificent article demanding the right of Jewish entry into America—which flows with milk and honey, even if it is not the original Promised Land.

Such a suggestion, which seems so obvious to us, must come from American rather than British pens. It might savour of criticism, and the British are too polite to criticise America. We know that (for some reason that would be worth while analysing at length on another occasion) Americans assume that it is good for the British to be attacked in unmeasured terms, while British "interference in American business" is said only to do harm, worsening relations and making things more difficult for American reformers. That puts a very considerable responsibility upon you. A Socialist like yourself, Max, knows that America is not in fact streamlined in chromium from Hollywood to Fifth Avenue, but is a nation with poverty (I've seen your share-croppers literally starving in Arkansas and Mississippi) as great as any in Poland or Hungary; you know that to millions in the United States freedom means freedom to be unemployed; that the racialism you rightly condemn in its most extreme form in Nazi Germany, as you do its milder forms in the British Empire, is the accepted basis of society throughout your Southern States. American Liberals love writing articles about this effete little island, which in fact fought Germany for a year by itself; they do not even dare to tell the American public that British casualties in the war were higher (not relatively, but positively) than those of America, which has three times our population. You know all this and understand clearly enough the conflicts inside the United States. Are you not a bit out of date in bothering so much about British Imperialism, which is in retreat even in India, Greece and Indonesia? What about your own racialism? And, if you are really worried about Imperialism, let me call your attention to the aspirations of some of your own generals and your business tycoons.

By all means preach to us in your spare time; to do so is always the privilege of those who have bomb-proof pulpits. But I am not sure, if you once get to work on your own complex problems, that you will have much leisure left over for preaching about ours. We built our Labour Party during a period of British Imperialism because Socialists were no longer content to be a mere adjunct of the Liberal Party. But, except in two States, an American Socialist still has to choose between voting Democrat or Republican. Will this choice content you in the Presidential election at the end of Mr. Truman's term? How far will you be able to defend your liberties, if American Business decides that the best way out of its present economic mess is to beat the Imperial drum and maintain a huge programme of national armaments and a policy of foreign adventure? I know to-day America is rushing back to civilian life and free enterprise; but the contrast between strikes and labour crises to-day and booming profits during the period of war-time discipline carries a lesson that may not be lost on American capitalists. If they fail in their present trial of strength with the C.I.O., some of them may get round to the notion that an American Duce could make trains run to time.

These are only questions thrown out to you across the Atlantic; but they do need answering. For I cannot avoid the conclusion, as I read the violent diatribes of American Liberals against Britain, that they are born less of knowledge of British sins than of a sense of frustration in your own country, of uneasiness about its future, and of guilt about its share of responsibility for the world's misery.

KINGSLEY MARTIN

EXPORTS AND PLANNING

In a speech at Ottawa on January 6th, Mr. Herbert Morrison said that the recovery and expansion of Britain's export trade "is our next great national task . . . for which we are all orepared to make sacrifices in our daily lives." So good a Socialist as the Lord President of the Council can scarcely imagine that the objective for whose attainment he was calling is an end desirable in itself. Indeed, undue concentration on foreign trade might easily lead to a distortion of our national economy which would be the antithesis of sensible State planning. We cannot afford to have booming export industries against a background of derelict rural areas.

If, however, Mr. Morrison was concerned to point simply to a disagreeable necessity under which we labour, his words were timely enough. The official estimate is that in 1946 Britain's foreign trade is likely to show a debit balance of £750 millions. This figure may err on the side of pessimism; but, for the first eleven months of 1945, the accumulated visible deficit was over £650 millions, and in November alone our imports exceeded exports by nearly £60 millions. It is difficult, therefore, to be confident that next year's deficit will be much less than £700 millions, or approximately the amount likely to be left out of the American "line of credit" and our own diminished gold and dollar holdings after meeting our trade needs until Congress ratifies the loan, finding our gold contribution to the Bretton Woods' Monetary Fund and liquidating some of our sterling debts. That is to say, the "free" proportion of the dollar loan is unlikely to last more than a year or 15 months.

Could we deliberately economise in our imports without serious detriment to ourselves? In 1936–38 the annual average of our retained imports of merchandise was just under £870 millions; but only a quarter of this sum represented manufactured goods (which we could presumably forgo most easily) and a large proportion of those "manufactures" consisted of petrol and non-ferrous metals in a very early stage of processing. If we are to obtain quickly enough the machinery which we require for re-equipment, there cannot be much saving on manufactured imports, even if domestic production is rapidly stepped up. Equally, if exports are to be increased, there must be a proportionate increase in our raw material imports; and on the assumption that we implement a policy of full employment—with the consequence that wage packets are full and regular—our national consumption of food is likely to increase much more than the output of British farms.

It is therefore to an expansion of exports that we must look. Can it be achieved? Certainly no increase over the 1938 volume can be attained unless demobilisation proceeds much further than has yet been announced. In 1938 about 1,300,000 people were engaged directly in export industries, and a further 500,000 were indirectly engaged. Even if we assume that there is some increase in productivity per man, the redistribution of labour required to achieve even a 50 per cent. increase in exports is bound to create, under the happiest circumstances, a fairly acute labour shortage in industries catering for home consumption. If we endeavour at the same time to retain something like 1,500,000 more men in the Services than before the war, the result will be scarcity leading to an irresistible consumers' revolt.

Assuming, however, that our armed forces are cut down to a level which we can economically sustain, and that the necessary surplus of production over domestic needs can be attained, the task of finding market outlets for exports will not be easy. Out of the £470 millions which our exports realised in 1938, nearly £50 millions represented coal, which is unlikely to be available for export in any quantity. Nor can there be much expansion in our exports (nearly £40 millions in 1938) of food, drink, and tobacco. This means that our exports of manufactures will have to be at least doubled if a 75 per cent. increase in aggregate exports is to be secured. But, apart from the probability of intensive American competition—particularly in Latin America and the Far East—Europe's purchases, except on extended credit terms (which we cannot afford to give), are likely to be smaller than before the war; and most overseas countries have developed during the course of the war domestic industries which are competitive with ours.

Weighing all these factors, we find it difficult to believe that a 75 per cent. increase in exports can be achieved. Nevertheless, having committed ourselves to restoring almost immediately a convertible currency, we are under the necessity of increasing exports as far as possible; for, under the terms of our pact with America, if we have to have recourse to the few defensive measures allowed us, the fact that they must be "non-discriminating" means that we shall have to embark on restriction in the most objectionable of all possible forms. If, that is to say, British merchants have to be rationed with foreign exchange to make purchases of any particular commodity in the United States, their purchases of that commodity from other sources—even from British colonies—must be proportionately cut, even though this would make nonsense of our solemn pledges to foster colonial development.

What follows? The inference seems clear that we must lose no time in doing what we can, within the limitations imposed upon us, to secure an expansion of exports compatible with Socialist planning. That is to say, we must "cast our bread upon the waters." Continuing for the needs of peace the war-time system of bulk purchasing by the State, we must "unilaterally" offer to make long-term contracts at guaranteed prices for the purchase of food-stuffs and raw materials which we consider we are likely to need over, say, the next ten years. We have committed ourselves to eschew "bilateral" bargains, and we cannot, therefore, attach "strings" to these contracts; but we can reasonably hope that the other parties, having the assurance that over a considerable period they will have regular supplies of sterling, will in their turn freely negotiate with us for long-term purchases of the types of British goods which they consider, in the interests of their own planned economies, they are likely to require. It can hardly be objected, even by the United States, that this would run counter to the spirit of the Draft Trade Convention; for the basic purpose of such trade policy on our part would be to create a stable expansion of trade. And that the Convention purports to have as its target.

THIS ENGLAND

A 5/- prize for the first entry in this column goes to Julian Huxley.

Paste entries on postcard or slip of paper and give details of origin. Address to THIS ENGLAND, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.

Referring to the nationalization of the Bank of England, Sir Herbert Williams said that in the City of London we had a certain number of dangerous quislings. He was not impressed by the fact that nobody had held one meeting in the City to protest against nationalization.—*The Times.*

G.I. brides who thought the [Russian] ship was calling at a British port on the way to New York besieged the authorities in London with applications for passages. Nearly all described themselves as "Communists."—*News Chronicle.*

Some years ago my son was unfairly dismissed by a farmer. Being his indignant mother, I exclaimed: "Horrid man, I wish his crops could all fail this year." Sure enough, we had the wettest season experienced for some years. The farmer was very badly hit and lost a good deal. Am I a witch?—Letter in *Radio Times.*

Belsen and Buchenwald have put a stop to the too-thin woman age, to the cult of undernourishment.—*Vogue.*

A LONDON DIARY

The process of electing a Secretary-General is very like choosing a Presidential candidate at an American Convention. A name is put up, canvassed in the papers, tried out in innumerable whispered conversations among delegates, discussed over dinner-tables, run as a hot favourite and then allowed to take a back place as a more probable winner appears. As the betting stood on Wednesday, I should say that Mr. Eden was still well in the running, but not a hot favourite; that Mr. Simic (who was a Yugoslav Ambassador before the arrival of Tito) is still being canvassed, but not now enthusiastically, by the Russians; that Mr. Stassen (who is a probable runner for the Presidential Stakes in 1948) does not want the job and that General Eisenhower is the only American whose reputation would outweigh the general objection to having an American Secretary-General, as well as an American site for UNO. He has refused, but I shall not be surprised if another appeal is made to him. Mr. Masaryk of Czechoslovakia says he is not a candidate. This leaves, as to-day's favourite, Mr. Lester Pearson, Canadian Ambassador in Washington, who has made a reputation at various international meetings. But there may be other dark horses yet, especially as it is really agreed that a European approved by the British, Russians and Americans would be best if he could be found. Mr. Lie, Foreign Minister of Norway, is therefore a very possible choice; he is popular with everyone and is the sort of candidate on whom people might agree at the last minute. The best joke was pulled—I think by a British pressman. Perhaps he wanted a change in the leadership of the British Conservative Party, and persuaded some South American to approve the name of Winston Churchill. This particular stunt has finally to be scotched by a personal message from Mr. Churchill saying he intended to go on being Tory leader. It is always possible, of course, that the election will be postponed, and that Mr. Gladwyn Jebb, the very efficient Foreign Office organiser of the present conference, will be left to carry on without another appointment being made. The Russians, who do not want a big political figure, might favour this solution.

* * *

I am only surprised that G.I.s have waited so long to demonstrate their desire to go home. Of all soldiers Americans overseas are the most lonely and the most attached to their homes. Few of them ever really understood why they came to Europe, and those that did feel that they've finished the job. When they get back to the States they will be faced with the contrast between the glamour world painted for them in newspapers and magazines and realities of labour trouble, unemployment, and lack of leadership or direction. Of course the same longing and the same danger of disillusion threaten all Displaced Persons—a phrase which should cover not only the homeless millions of Europe and Asia, but also all Service men waiting demobilisation and millions of evacuees of one sort or another. "The primary instinct at work in the world now," said a senior civil servant to me the other day, "is that of the homing pigeon. Economically it is wasteful of course for every demobilised man to have fifty-six days at home before starting work. But the Government never did a more right and sensible thing. Men just want to stand in their own backyard or sit before their own fireside, even if the yard has been blitzed and there is not much coal. After a bit they will want to do something active: for the moment they want to be individuals, unregimented, lords of their own castles." My friend was quite right. Unfortunately, even the experience of a period of domesticity is often disillusioning and I thought the B.B.C. showed real appreciation of its function and opportunity when it started on Monday night its series: "It's good to be home, but . . ." A commercial broadcasting system would never attempt such a series.

I still doubt if the affair of Mr. Ellis Smith is of much political importance. He was not, I believe, suited to this particular job. Men who resign from posts of responsibility are apt to nationalise their action and Mr. Smith's remarks about the "stings" and insults he suffered at the Board of Trade confirm my view that the personal facts played a larger part than the "fundamental divergences" which he also reported to his constituents. Still, Sir Stafford Cripps will have to deal with these public issues when he gives his side of the picture at a Party meeting. Failure to nationalise the cotton industry; undue emphasis on austerity and the need for exports; the disposal of surplus stocks; allocation of Government-built factories to private firms instead of the C.W.S.; neglect of the policy of planning maximum production to meet the needs of the people—here is the catalogue of fairly important points of principle on which Mr. Smith, as he says, "came to disagree with others." Certainly in some of these matters his quarrel could not have been solely with Sir Stafford. He can hardly have maintained that the Board of Trade should not try to speed up exports. That is its job. The responsibility for securing maximum planned production and settling the future of the cotton industry is surely a Cabinet matter. Is it that Mr. Smith feels that a half-way house towards Socialism is untenable and that endeavour to find compromise solutions may land a British Government in the sort of fix in which (as a correspondent argues in a later page of this issue) the Labour Government in New Zealand is now placed? If so, he might, with advantage, have made his thesis and his own position clearer.

* * *

Sir Ernest Simon's electoral address to the constituents of the Combined English Universities is an unusually truthful and convincing document. As a Liberal M.P. in the 1929–31 Government, Sir Ernest was never very happy; his interests are cross-bench and practical, as he explains in his short account of his activities in local Government, in housing, in industry and education. Though he has never been a member of the Labour Party, he is a pupil of the Webbs and one of these capitalists who would never agree theoretically that capitalism can't and won't do things that have to be done, but would always act as a Socialist if the job had to be done and Socialists were doing it.

* * *

Common cant has it that the increase of State activity to-day is reducing the need for personal service and drying up the wells of human charity. It is true that we are to have, thank goodness, a national medical service and that the great private hospitals do not now desire a large proportion of their funds from current benefactories. But those who want to give time or money to "social service" have still unlimited opportunities. I recommend, by way of example, a book called *Problem Families*, which is published at two and sixpence, by the Pacifist Service Units (6 Endsleigh Street, W.C.1) who have been trying, by personal effort, to introduce some civilisation into "problem" homes which are as appalling as any described by Dickens. (It is interesting to compare *Problem Families* and its predecessor, *Our Towns* with the descriptions of the far more wide-spread, but not essentially worse, conditions described, say, in the early chapters of *Bleak House*.) The work described in this book is very personal and it needs specialised training. Mrs. Barclay sums up the problem and discusses the suggested remedies in a postcript. She concludes that "if every family in the land had a good house in a well-planned town, if every child had the best education we could provide," the problem family might disappear, within a generation, "as a social menace." Even so, it would not disappear. As it is, "the number of problem families increases alarmingly."

* * *

I strongly sympathise with the Ulstermen who have written to me protesting against the new Northern Ireland Franchise Bill. Gerrymandering is nothing new in Ulster politics, but it seems disgraceful that the Tory majority at Stormont should carry its fear of the Nationalist vote to the point of further restricting the already limited franchise. While we now have universal suffrage for British local elections, the Ulster Minister for Home Affairs, Mr. Warnock, calmly announces that this recent reform is "only an experiment" and that there is no reason why Ulster should imitate it. Under the new Bill, the "lodgers' vote" has been abolished—which will deny the vote to thousands living in rooms or sharing with relatives and friends—but plural voting remains, on what is now purely a property franchise.

* * *

The actors and singers were on their mettle at Monday's reopening of the *Players Theatre* in its new home under the Arches of Charing Cross Station and they gave remarkably good performances. What a job it was to create a theatre there at all in present circumstances and how it was done I can guess because I looked in there four days before the day of opening and found "Mlle. La Flamme" appropriately painting the place red. I think most of the cast has been helping in the preparations one way and another. The result is not yet a thing of beauty which will last for ever, but a rather bare but habitable place full of atmosphere and capable of unlimited improvement. The Players are to be congratulated; after cheering some of us through the blitz, they are now ready to cheer a larger number in our post-war depressions.

* * *

Lord Beaverbrook's account of the General Election, with himself in the role of a modest, if consenting violet, is to be read, I presume, in a purely Beaverwickian sense.

CRITIC

HANG OUT LESS FLAGS

"O, say, did ye see by the wan wintry light
At UNO's headquarters the flags bravely flying?
The bunting of battle and sovereign might,
Those symbols of national prestige undying?
The colours Allied, and draped by their side
Ex Neutrals' loud emblems of national pride?
O, say, for these banners does mankind still crave
As the flags of the Nations so gloriously wave?"

"O, yes, we have seen this resplendent array.
This bright but, admittedly, motley collection
As sovereign Powers their colours display,
And the spectacle offers much food for reflection.
Though the show is designed to dazzle the mind
It brings some misgivings to shell-shocked mankind,
Resembling the décor that once used to wave
O'er the League that now lies in a suicide's grave.

"Democracy's ensigns in red, white and blue,
Appear with the flags of Democracy's haters,
The banners of despots obtrude on the view,
And standards hung out by the States of Dictators.
Despite some increase in the Powers pledged to peace
The choice of these flags shows a touch of caprice,
And some have squeezed in by a pretty close shave
Where the flags of the Nations so gloriously wave."

"Would mankind lose faith if these standards were furled
As out-of-date totems for tribal obedience
And UNO produced for the whole of the world
A banner inviting a global allegiance?
Do flags to the fore as symbols of war
Promote international *esprit de corps?*
Say would not world concord be easier to save
If one Uno banner should peacefully wave?"

SAGITTARIUS

"CASE BARBAROSSA."—II

On September 6th, 1940, Jodl sends a Directive to the Counter-Intelligence Service, whose head was Admiral Canaris, which states:

> The Eastern territory will be manned more strongly in the weeks to come. These regroupings must not create the impression in Russia that we are preparing an offensive in the East. On the other hand, Russia will realise that strong and highly-trained German troops are stationed in the Gouvernement-General, in the Eastern provinces, and in the Protectorate. She should draw the conclusion that we can at any time protect our interests, especially in the Balkans, with strong forces against Russian seizure.

On September 18th, 1940, information is received about anti-German propaganda in the Red Army. The Germans see that Russia assumes Hitler's intention to attack, and bases its work on the thesis of an inevitable German-Russian conflict. On September 26th, 1940, Raeder tells Hitler that something has got to be done in Lybia. "The Suez Canal must be captured with German assistance. From Suez we must advance through Palestine and Syria. Then Turkey is in our power. The Russian problem will then assume a different appearance. Russia is fundamentally frightened of Germany. It is questionable whether action against Russia from the North will then still be necessary." Hitler agreed to Raeder's suggestions. He clearly hoped at that time that Russia's attention, and her defensive preparations, could be diverted South-eastwards.

On October 30th, 1940, the code word "Ostfall" (East Case) appears for the first time in the documents. One may presume that it is a contingent plan for the invasion of the Soviet Union, with its emphasis perhaps on the Balkans. On November 4th, 1940, Hitler tells Raeder that in case of a German advance in the Balkans in support of Italy, he expects Russia to remain neutral, but that the whole question will be talked over with Molotov in the near future. "Preparations for an Eastern Incident ('Ostfall') are, however, to be continued."

The conversations with Molotov begin in Berlin on November 10th, and, two days later, Hitler issues War Directive No. 18:

> Political discussions have been initiated with the aim of clarifying Russia's attitude for the time being. Irrespective of the results of these discussions, all preparations for the East which have already been verbally ordered will be continued. Instructions on this will follow as soon as the general outline of the army's operational plans has been submitted to, and approved by, me.

Raeder doesn't like it. He has a conference with Hitler on November 14th, 1940, from which he gathers that "the Führer is still inclined to instigate the conflict with Russia." Raeder recommends "putting it off until the time after the victory over England, since there is a heavy strain on the German forces and the end of warfare in the West is not in sight." But Hitler keeps his eye on the East.

The course of the negotiations with Molotov is regarded as satisfactory. On November 16th, 1940, the following conclusions are recorded:

> For the time being there will be no fixed treaty. Russia is apparently ready to join the Three Power Pact after several further questions have been clarified. . . . Molotov is notified of contemplated German action in the Balkans in support of Italy and raises no objections. He suggests the creation of conditions suitable for Russian influence in Bulgaria, similar to German influence in Rumania, but this suggestion is not entered into by the Germans. However, Germany discloses her disinterestedness in the Turkish domination of the Dardanelles and sympathy with Russian desires for bases there, as well as for the regaining of the Kars and Ardahan areas from Turkey.

With Molotov back in Moscow, and the world wondering whether Russia will really join the Three Power Pact, the Chief of the Army General Staff, on December 5th, 1940, reports to Hitler about the planned operation in the East. The Führer declares his agreement, and on December 18th, 1940, he issues from his headquarters

"Directive No. 21, Case Barbarossa." It bears his signature, is initialled by Jodl, Keitel and Warlimont, and opens with the sentence: "The German Armed Forces must be prepared to crush Soviet Russia in a quick campaign before the end of the war against England." It goes on:

> If occasion arises, I shall order the concentration of troops for action against Soviet Russia eight weeks before the intended beginning of operations. Preparations requiring more time are—if this has not yet been done—to begin immediately and are to be completed by May 15th, 1941. Great caution has to be exercised lest the intention to attack be recognised.

But Raeder still doesn't like it. On December 27th he goes to argue it out with the Führer. Again he "voices serious objections against the Russian campaign before the defeat of Britain." Hitler desires all possible advancement of submarine construction—the present construction figures (12-18 per month) are much too low—but he insists that "the last Continental enemy must be removed under all circumstances because of the present political development (Russia's tendency to interfere in Balkan affairs), before he can come to grips with England. Thus the army must obtain the necessary strength. After that, full concentration on air force and navy can follow." Raeder has to give in. He notes: "The situation is changed by Russia's unreliability, as evident in the Balkan States. Consequently rearmament of the army is necessary. But the emphasis on navy and air force against Britain is not to be impaired."

Operation "Sea-Lion" is thus shelved, and the all-out effort against the Soviet Union begins.

Meanwhile, how does the Soviet-German economic balance-sheet stand at the turn of the year? The answer is contained in a manuscript, entitled "Basic Facts for a History of German War and Armaments Economy," compiled in 1944 by Maj. Gen. Thomas, Chief of the War Economy Department under Göring. In this long and detailed account, Gen. Thomas writes:

> As reported previously, the Russians had made ready for their first reciprocal delivery valuable foods and raw material. . . . and in consideration of the importance of these quantities involved to the German war economy and the importance which the Supreme Command attached to the maintenance of friendly relations with Soviet Russia, the question of immediate reciprocal deliveries became steadily more pressing.
>
> As the Russians delivered quickly and well, it was imperative to accelerate reciprocal German deliveries. Consequently the German High Command decided to offer the Russians even more war material than was already manufactured or under construction. . . . The Führer ordered on March 30th, 1940, that—as far as necessary—the delivery of war material to the Russians should have priority over the delivery to the German Armed Forces.
>
> This order put some of the army departments in a difficult position, as the High Command also desired production for German requirements. On August 14th, 1940, the Chief of the War Industry Staff, during a conference with Reich Marshal Göring, was informed that the Führer desired punctual delivery to the Russians only till spring, 1941. Later on we would have no further interest in completely satisfying Russian demands.

General Thomas states that he was informed by Göring in November, 1940, of the action planned in the East and received instructions to draw up a plan for the exploitation of the Soviet Union. He sums up his conclusions:

> Any operation leading to the occupation of the European part of the Soviet Union, excluding the Urals, should result in the following: during the first few months Germany would be relieved in the field of nutrition and raw materials, if a rapid seizure should succeed in preventing the destruction of stock, capturing the mineral oil fields of the Caucasus undestroyed, and solving the problem of transport. Should the campaign last longer, effective relief would be dependent on the solution of the transport problem . . . Further, the supply of Germany with indiarubber, tungsten, copper, platinum, tin, asbestos, and manila hemp would remain unsolved until communication with the Far East can be established. The Caucasian fuel supply is indispensable for the exploitation of the occupied territories.

On January 11th, 1941, new and far-reaching agreements are signed between Germany and the Soviet Union, covering economic, resettlement, and frontier questions, but the atmosphere grows increasingly uncomfortable. More disturbing reports reach Berlin from the Balkans, especially from Rumania and Bulgaria, where "Russian interference" is noted. At the same time British diplomatic moves in Moscow are for the first time noted as being of a possibly serious character. By now Hitler calls Stalin an "ice-cold blackmailer", and tells Raeder that it is "hope in the U.S.A. and Russia which keeps Britain together."

On January 19th, 1941, Mussolini, accompanied by Ciano and the Italian service chiefs, visits Hitler at his headquarters. The Italians are in a bad way in Albania and in Lybia. Hitler gives them his appreciation of the situation. He reveals that there has been a Russian *démarche* "on account of our massing of troops in Rumania" and states that it will be duly rejected. "The Russians always become more insolent at a time when they cannot be harmed, namely in winter." He tells the Duce some of his worries.

> Although we have very favourable political and economic agreements with Russia, I prefer to rely on powerful means at my disposal. Very considerable parts of these are therefore tied down on the Russian frontier, thus preventing me from supplying the armament industry with sufficient manpower to bring the armament of the air force and navy to the highest possible pitch.
>
> The Russians are continually trying to work out new demands . . . It is therefore necessary to keep a constant eye on the Russian factor and to be on guard, by means of strength and clever diplomacy. Formerly Russia would have been no danger at all, for on land she cannot imperil us in the least; but now, in the era of the air force, the Rumanian oilfields can be turned into an expanse of smoking debris from Russia and from the Mediterranean, and the life of the Axis depends on these oilfields.

On February 2nd, 1941, Hitler holds an operational conference. The Chief of Staff gives his estimate of the Russian situation.

> Enemy strength approximately 100 infantry divisions, 25 cavalry divisions, approximately 30 mechanised divisions. Our own strength about the same, but far superior in quality. Among leading Soviet military personalities, Timoshenko is the only outstanding figure.
>
> Russian operational intentions are unknown. There are no strong forces at the frontier. Any retreat could only be on a small scale since the Baltic States and the Ukraine are vital to the Russians for supply reasons.

Operational orders for the three German Army Groups, North, Centre, and South, are then outlined by the Chief of Staff, who stresses the uncertainty of Hungary's attitude, and insists that agreements with all States taking part, with the exception of Rumania, can be made only at the eleventh hour. With Rumania, however, "it is a matter of life and death." In the end, Hitler orders that agreements with participating States may not be concluded until there is no longer any necessity for camouflage.

Raeder's Chief of Staff urges the occupation of Malta even before "Barbarossa," but is told by the Supreme Command that this is contemplated only after the execution of "Barbarossa." On February 18th, 1941, measures are begun for the concealment of the preparations for "Barbarossa." In spite of the "far-reaching disintegration of operation 'Sea Lion,' everything possible should be done to maintain the impression among our own troops that the invasion of Britain is being further prepared." In order to create further uncertainty about German plans, the army High Command prepares the sudden "blocking" of certain areas on the Channel coast and in Norway.

On March 1st, 1941, Germany marches into Bulgaria, and Bulgaria's consent to this is disapproved in Moscow." But the German High Command still felt sure that the Soviet leaders, while taking precautions, were anxious to avoid war.

PETER DE MENDELSSOHN

(To be concluded.)

GAS

Of course, people are annoyed when it take five hours to cook the Sunday dinner; whe cafés serve sausage-meat sandwiches instead o the usual three-course lunch; when the offic kettle won't boil for tea; and when they can' take a bath for three days. And then, to ca these irritations, they read that yet another ol lady has been found dead in bed because sh forgot to turn off the gas tap when the pressur dropped. So, as the public feels better if ther is a scapegoat for its discomforts, the gas com panies are blamed for everything from indigestio to unnatural death.

As I grumble as much as the next man—and a my joint suffered, too—I have tried to find ou if the recent fluctuations in London's gas pres sure have been due to anything more than th shortage of labour and storage ("gasometer" capacity adduced by the gas companies. And after discussions with officials, engineers an workmen at one of the largest plants in London I see no reason to dispute the companies' case The facts seem to be as publicly stated: th variations in pressure have nothing to do with the impending nationalisation of the industry with politics or even with coal supplies. Nor apart from particular and isolated instances have they been due to strikes or to the men "going slow." As the particular undertaking which I visited belongs to one of the most efficient concerns in the country, conditions in i may be better than in other works. But, as a large proportion of London's gas is produced by this company, its technical problems are probably typical.

In this works, the twin scarcities of labour and storage capacity are obvious at a glance. In one department after another, the men themselves told me that they had worked double shifts, that two were doing the work of three, and that the arrival of forty Pioneers had by no means filled all the gaps. Daily output is still nearly 20 per cent. below the optimum. And this, coupled with the lack of adequate storage facilities, makes it impossible to meet peak loads without a reduction in pressure. Looking down from one of the retort houses, I could see men working on the skeleton of what had been the second largest gasholder in the works before it had been destroyed by bombing. "It's more than four years since that was hit," said one of the men to me, "and it wouldn't be so bad if our largest holder wasn't out of action, too." And much the same story is true of other London plants.

It's easy to see the importance of proper storage capacity. Gas, unlike electricity, can be stored in periods of low demand against peak requirements. At the present time, the reserve margin is extremely low and, while it is sufficient to bridge the gap between consumption and production at peak hours like lunch and breakfast, the increased load in the cold and short winter days soon makes inroads upon the limited amount that can be stored. With a large concern like the Gas Light and Coke Co., which has a number of works all over London linked by mains, this means a general drop in pressure throughout the whole area served by the company. No emergency production boost is able adequately to meet the sudden jump in demand as soon as the thermometer drops a few points.

The problem of labour is more involved. There has been some criticism of the gas companies for failing to anticipate this winter's crisis by employing more soldiers at an earlier date. They claim, however, that in spite of repeated requests, insufficient military labour had been drafted into the industry to meet the emergency before it was upon them. It may be, perhaps, that they did not press this demand with sufficient vigour, or that the Ministry of Labour did not act quickly enough. I cannot try to fix the responsibility; but it is clear that there were not enough soldiers at the right time and that sometimes men were posted away soon after they had learnt the job

Being a public utility, the gas industry did not lose a high proportion of manual workers to the Services: most of those actually called up were office, maintenance and distributive workers. But some of the younger men went; and six years of conscription have certainly denied the industry its normal intake of young recruits. Many of the workers who were left are getting past the age when they can properly meet the claims the work makes on their strength and stamina. Wartime conditions have made heavy additional demands upon them. "You begin to feel a bit tired at fifty," one stoker said, "after six years of seven shifts a week, all weathers and all blitzes." And the work isn't too pleasant: in winter, the men move quickly from fairly high temperatures into cold draughts; and they work with fumes in their throats and dust in their eyes. When I was told by an official that few people leave the industry once they have entered it, I was rather incredulous. But after I had seen the figures and talked to a number of men at random, I was surprised to find that many of them have been at the same works for up to forty years. Some of them have their sons working alongside them. One man told me he was the third generation in his family to be a gas worker. And, although there is said to be much "paternalism" in the industry, the trade unions are well organised and utilised—at least, in the works belonging to this company. Certainly I found little sign of any undercurrent of dissatisfaction among the men; and that is usually pretty easy to sense if it exists.

A lot has been said about the difficulty of getting recruits for the industry. It is probably true that men demobilised from the Army at present find it fairly easy to get "clean" work and tend to do so. But this state of affairs will last only while there is a general manpower shortage. There are a few men who could claim Class B releases. If they don't, it seems to be due to the general disabilities imposed upon men taking Class B tickets, rather than to a marked unwillingness to go back to gas work. For this company estimates that it will have to reabsorb about seven thousand men who were employed by it before the war. There are quite a few men now applying for work in gas plants who before enlistment had been in other trades. One man I met in the retort house had been out of the Army for only a few weeks. He used to be a builder's labourer. "This job," he said, "has steady money. In building I never knew what I'd take home at the end of the week. Conditions? They aren't too bad." And, during the last week alone, this particular works—which employs about seven hundred men—had received thirty applications for jobs, of which twenty-three had been accepted. At this rate, it will soon be possible for it to dispense altogether with military help, especially if the serious shortage of heavy labourers and retort-house workers can be made good.

Even after they have learnt the job, troops are hardly an efficient labour force. On one operation, normally done by sixteen men, eight experienced men and twenty soldiers have to be used. And there is little reason for the soldiers to be enthusiastic about the job they are doing. The work is heavy and disagreeable: working alongside skilled men and pieceworkers, they receive their normal Army pay. (There seems to be a good case for giving a bonus to soldiers who are doing a job for which civilian workers are paid rates above average.)

Wage-rates for the industry are relatively good. In a forty-seven-hour week, a man would normally earn about £4 7*s*. At present, with overtime, he receives about £5 5*s*. before paying his income tax. A shift worker makes nearly £1 a shift. In this particular company, a good deal of attention has been paid to welfare. Apart from a profit-sharing scheme, there are quite good sickness, death and pension benefits. The accident and illness rate is surprisingly small when account is taken of the working environment. Married men in the Services, moreover, have received the balance of their civilian pay. And, though I talked to men who never take a shift off work because they can't afford to lose the money, some improvements have been gained recently, and the men expect more to follow in the course of the next year. Nationalisation of the industry—in contrast to the situation in the coal mines—is not looked upon by them as their sole hope of better working conditions. In the short run, they expect the changes to be confined to the technical and organisational levels.

NORMAN MACKENZIE.

SENSIBLE MEN?

We have had a Labour Government in New Zealand for ten years, and it has accomplished a good deal of the obviously limited programme the party leaders set. In this it has been assisted by the recovery since 1935 of world markets in general and the British market in particular. Hitler and re-armament were on our side. The guaranteed price has given farmers opportunities to plan ahead with the certainty that the bottom would not fall out of the market as soon as they had made capital improvements and were short of reserves. Industry has been encouraged by Protection and reasonable loan facilities. A universal medical scheme of dubious worth is in operation, hospital treatment is free, and pensions generous compared with the rate ten years ago. There is very little severe want.

But the system has not been changed. Prosperity is due to high wages and full war-time employment. Although the Opposition hiss the word Socialist off their tongues at every opportunity, they probably know, and thoughtful Labour back benchers certainly know, that this is no Socialist government. The Socialist will is in the rank and file, but it is seldom strong enough to make any impression on the bosses. If the pressure of the rank and file for a particular measure is too strong to be resisted directly, the bosses let it through, drawing its teeth on the way. The latest example of this technique is the nationalisation of the Bank of New Zealand. Mr. Nash, the Minister of Finance, has resisted this bitterly since 1935. Finally pressure became too strong, and a resolution to nationalise was forced through the Committee of the Labour Party Conference, opposed by Mr. Nash. When the resolution was put to the whole Conference, Mr. Nash seconded it, without heartiness, and the Bank Bill has now been passed by the House of Representatives. Shareholders are to be compensated at a basic price of 45*s*. for a £1 share (slightly under the present market value), the present Board of Directors is to remain, and Mr. Nash assured the gratified Opposition that there would be no departure from "sound banking principles." There were no cheers from the Government back benches.

One lesson we in this country have learnt is that controls are neutral, neither good nor bad; but that centralised control stifles democracy. That is our main problem at present in New Zealand. Some members of the Government seem to recognise it. There have been occasional tentative movements towards decentralisation. Regional primary production councils were set up with the aim of increasing food exports to Britain and the Pacific area. The principle was good, but the obdurate hostility of the farmers, the inherent failure of the Government to understand rural problems, their refusal to fix targets and prices in good time, and the lack of efficient publicity, caused frustration and increased dissatisfaction in rural areas.

There was also the Organisation for National Development, whose purpose no one defined with clarity. It was apparently a fact-finding and advisory body and covered a wide range of subjects; but no sooner had regional committees been set up than it was announced that O.N.D. would shortly cease to function, and its operations would be taken over by the Ministry of Works. In effect, this means planning from the top, instead of on the TVA principle.

The one positive step in decentralisation has been taken by the Rehabilitation Department, which handles large sums of money in connection with returned Servicemen's loans, farm purchases, University bursaries and schemes for teaching trades. There has been mixed comment on the functioning of the Department's officers and committees, but it is as yet too early to make a sound judgment on its activities.

In theory it is difficult to make out a case for the amount of centralisation that has been put upon us. The individual citizen is losing his sense of responsibility to the community. The Government is "they," not "us." It is a remote machine in Wellington rather than an integral part of the lives of the people. This feeling of separation produces cynicism and apathy in the mass of the people, which is increased by the working out of Acton's judgment on long-service politicians. Power does corrupt, gradually in good men, but inevitably. Their ideals are lowered little by little. In effecting compromise, which cannot be avoided in a parliamentary democracy, they tend to lower their standards to save themselves from continued arduous negotiation; at the same time in their dealings with their friends and their own party they become more autocratic and less tolerant of criticism. They tend to judge their supporters' loyalty and the value of their advice by the quality of the subservience offered them.

This has meant a gradual narrowing in the ranks of the Government's close advisers, and an ever-widening gap between the policy makers and the ordinary party member. In addition, the top party men feel that they must live and entertain in a manner befitting members of the Government of a British Dominion. In other words, their social habits are also sharply divided from the people they represent and upon whose support they depend. The lesson British Socialists can learn here is that democracy must be as rigorously guarded within the party as within the whole community. If the British Labour Party wants to remain in power and continue to progress, a committee should be set up to study schemes for retirement of older members and their replacement by young men.

There is no doubt that here in New Zealand the rank and file Labour supporter is a little uneasy. Reactions are different, but almost always they are defensive. Perhaps the most common is to say, "Yes, but think what it would be like if the Tories were in." This is a rather different attitude from the glory and elation of 1935. But the main point that must be made was brought up by the Parliamentary Correspondent of the NEW STATESMAN AND NATION when he wrote in the issue of September 1st: "These new Labour Members . . . came here to support a Socialist Government; they know they have not got one yet and they are sensible enough not to kick up a row. But in the end they are bound to prevail."

That is a very dangerous statement. In New Zealand, in 1935, ordinary Labour Members went to the House prepared to support a Socialist Government. It was not long before they knew they had not got one, and they too were "sensible" enough not to kick up a row. Finally, J. A. Lee protested and was expelled from the party. Another member followed him, but the rest stayed in the name of unity, with the vague and diminishing hope of reforming the party from within. The bosses had the situation under control and nothing happened. Now the Government majority has dwindled and a split would mean the wilderness. Reform from within has failed, reform by splitting is impossible, reform by defeat is inevitable, whether it is defeat in 1946 or 1949. The real Socialists in the party put off making their vital decision until it was too late. They were not sensible, they were craven. As we see things from here, Socialists in the British Parliament will find themselves faced with the same hard decision.

G. LE F. YOUNG

THE OPERA IMBROGLIO

In the long and disappointing chronicle of English opera we have reached what ought by rights to prove an auspicious moment. The country is full of troops back from a sojourn in Italy, during which they have become ardent and even knowledgeable opera-goers; one can't get a seat at Sadler's Wells; the B.B.C., even on its "light" wavelength, feels obliged to provide two or three varieties of operatic fare; Covent Garden has been redeemed from the jitterbugs by the far-sighted action of Messrs. Boosey and Hawkes; and *Peter Grimes* is being taken up by opera houses all over Europe and America. And now, to consolidate all this enthusiasm, the Arts Council offers financial support. In short, this is the moment to put our house in order, and to lay at last the firm foundations of a National Opera.

But as I write these words, I shudder. How desperately familiar they are! How often, these last fifty years, have we been assured that the solution of our operatic problems lay just round the corner! To the question whether any reason for greater confidence exists to-day, one can return only a dubious answer. On the one hand, the public demand does seem greater than ever before; on the other hand, there is little evidence that the problems are being auspiciously tackled. The cauldron is certainly simmering; but what are the ingredients? Who—and, above all, how many—are the cooks?

All cooks dislike strangers in the kitchen, and the musical public has so far been kept pretty thoroughly in the dark. Why? Largely, no doubt, from a natural disinclination to promise what can't be fulfilled; but partly, I suspect, from a desire to conceal the existing confusion. Any attempt to expound the situation is liable to give offence all round, and perhaps to become out of date before it is printed; nevertheless, the time seems ripe for a rather more open discussion of the whole problem than has hitherto appeared. Institutions which accept even a small amount of public money must be prepared to put up with public curiosity about their intentions. Here, then, so far as I have been able to discover them, are the ingredients of the cauldron:

(1) The affairs of Covent Garden have been vested in "a group of experts" known first as a Committee, and latterly as an Opera Trust. Its chairman, Lord Keynes, must be one of the world's busiest men; its general administrator, Mr. David Webster, though his work as chairman of the Liverpool Philharmonic Society has been justly admired, cannot claim any previous experience in the production of opera. After a spring and summer season devoted to English ballet and visiting Continental opera companies, the Trust hopes to put a resident English opera company into the field by next autumn. No information is available as to the musical or dramatic directors, or any of the proposed members, of this resident company. (2) The Sadler's Wells Ballet Company is to pass under the control of Covent Garden for an initial period of four years. (3) No similar arrangement—indeed, no liaison of any sort whatever—is at present contemplated between Covent Garden and the Sadler's Wells Opera Company. The latter, under a new director (Clive Carey), and minus its most promising producer (Eric Crozier) and two of its best singers (Joan Cross and Peter Pears), is now playing a safe repertory at Sadler's Wells. The seceding artists, who were largely responsible for the sensational success of *Peter Grimes* last June, have had to be specially re-engaged "as guests" before that work can resume its place in the repertory. (4) The Cross-Pears-Crozier group, together with other singers and actors, are now planning a tour of small-scale opera and drama, to open next June, of which the outstanding event will be the production of a new "chamber opera" by Benjamin Britten on the subject of the Rape of Lucrece. After some negotiation, Sadler's Wells and the Old Vic have dissociated themselves entirely from this venture. (5) A marriage has been arranged between Sir Thomas Beecham and Glyndebourne; but it is not, after all, to be operatically celebrated this summer. There is, however, a strong possibility that the "Chamber Opera Group" may launch themselves under the auspices of Glyndebourne. (6) The Carl Rosa Company carries on with the mixture as before. (7) There are rumours of yet another opera company, to be formed and run by a London commercial manager.

What leaps to the eye in all this is the sheer wastefulness and dispersal of effort. Anybody might suppose that the country was chock-a-block with suitable theatres, well-trained opera singers, and highly experienced conductors and producers. Whereas the truth is exactly the reverse: there is an absolute famine of the whole lot! Stanford pointed out long ago that prospects for English opera singers have always been so bleak that the more vocally gifted student inevitably gravitates towards oratorio and concert work. No doubt Mr. Webster hopes to lure some of these singers into (or back into) opera by the glamour and financial rewards of a Covent Garden contract. But even if these advantages are enough to offset the solid value of a first-class *Messiah* and *Elijah* connection, the brutal fact remains that such singers are not properly theatre-trained, and cannot be expected to pick up overnight the art of acting and singing in half a dozen different operatic styles. As for the shortage of producers and conductors, it is still more disastrous.

If one sits down to consider dispassionately the country's operatic assets, it is difficult to escape two broad conclusions. The first is the need for rationalisation. At the very least, Covent Garden and Sadler's Wells must work hand in hand; the Arts Council might be well advised to make financial assistance to either house dependent on some degree of co-operation. Rivalry between the two theatres is absurd. In Sadler's Wells we have a rough and unofficial, but promising, *Volksoper*; in Covent Garden the empty shell of a *Staatsoper*. The resources of both, singers included, ought to be combined under a single artistic direction. As Professor Dent suggests in his admirable new history of the Old Vic and Sadler's Wells,* Covent Garden is the natural home of the heavier opera (*e.g.* Wagner, Verdi, Richard Strauss), Sadler's Wells of the lighter (*e.g.* Mozart, Rossini, Bizet, Johann Strauss); it is therefore natural that the repertoire and casting for both theatres should form part of a single artistic policy. As for the group who have broken away from Sadler's Wells, they are too valuable to lose; every effort should be made to bring them back into the fold. Indeed, I am surprised that the Governors should ever have let them go.

The second essential is that we should swallow our national pride, admit that in this particular field we possess no solid English tradition, and remind ourselves that for a long time to come the great bulk of the repertory will continue to consist of foreign operas (mostly German and Italian) translated into English. In other words, we must make the fullest possible use of what little first-rate material is available, *irrespective of nationality*. What kept the artistic standard of Glyndebourne so high? The fact that Mr. Christie had the sense—and the flair—to disregard "patriotic" prejudice and engage three absolutely first-rate and irreplaceable men of the theatre: Carl Ebert, Fritz Busch and Rudolf Bing.

Of course we have promising material of our own; but the lack of real artistic guidance at the top is always making itself felt. In particular, the production side at Sadler's Wells (at any rate to judge from their current *Rigoletto*) is slipping back into the Dark Ages. The fact is that, on top of our endemic complaints, we are suffering from six years of operatic isolation: we have no standards, no models, not even a school of opera; our singers drift on to the stage with the minimum of general culture and musical taste. How are we to escape from this curse of perpetual mediocrity and provincialism? Only, I think, by pooling our slender resources, pocketing our pride, and submitting to the direction of musicians and producers who know the whole complex business of opera inside out, and retain in their blood the pre-war standards of a good Continental opera house.

DESMOND SHAWE-TAYLOR

* *A Theatre for Everybody.* T. V. Boardman and Co. 12s. 6d.

RADIO NOTES

This has been rather an exciting week on the air. An outstanding performance of Rostand's *L'Aiglon*, a mass of interesting and varied music (including that sinister, enigmatic masterpiece, Busoni's *Rondo Arlecchinesco*, Fauré's exquisite Violin Sonata, and Roberto Gerhard's *Cancioneros de Pedrell*, sung in excellent style by Sophie Wyss), a first-rate *Hour* (a repeat performance, but with improvements), and one of Nesta Pain's best expository features to date. If every week's broadcasting were even half as lively as this, we could throw away the Complaints Book.

To go into details, I listened with a mixture of amusement and exasperation to the argument about Football Pools—a dispute which could have no outcome in the circumstances, as the protagonists were assuming different premises. The Revd. E. B. Perkins, interested in our souls, wanted the money spent on furniture and textiles; Mr. Holland Hughes, on the other hand, took the view more bluntly expressed in the hymn of the Odeon Children's Club, so typical of the present age:—

> "To the Odeon we come
> To have our fun . . .
> We are thousands strong
> So we can't be wrong."

World Theatre already has two triumphs to its credit, and *L'Aiglon* seemed to me to make a near third. The minus quantity resides in the inferiority of Rostand to Euripides and Ibsen. But after *Chantecler* this is probably his best play. As radio it has distinct advantages: directness, a fiercely picturesque ambiance, characters who (with the exception of Metternich) derive most of their interest from situation rather than from personality. Reichstadt himself is ultimately as mysterious as Alexander I of Russia—and possibly for the same reasons: an incomplete character, his real personality was effectually overlaid by the immense weight of a legend he could not escape from because it was contemporary. His behaviour was compulsive, and beyond that we cannot see; the pathos, of which naturally Rostand made the most, lies in the externals: exile, a romantic appearance, tuberculosis, and what romantic historians like to regard as the villainy of Metternich (in fact, he was merely sensible). Readers of Miss Dorme Creston's fascinating and perceptive book, *In Search of Two Characters*, will have noticed how difficult it is for even the acutest psychologist to make much of a character as nebulous and elusive as Reichstadt. James McKechnie, who essayed the part in the play, was never less than effective and at times highly moving, but his style is too robust and too *human* to communicate the wayward and fitful passions, the neurotic struggle, the petulance and weakness of this poetic sprite. Mr. McKechnie simply cannot suggest an unpleasant person, and although there is no reason to suppose that Reichstadt was that, the strangeness born of his unnatural situation, and the vein of ruthlessness inherited from his horrible father, can be suggested only by a very stylised delivery, and not by the natural, generous, adult tones of which this fine actor disposes. But when that has been said, great credit goes to Val Gielgud for a most careful and imaginative production. Miss Clemence Dane's translation went far to eliminate the worst of the fustian with which Rostand packs his big scenes.

In spite of the sheer virtuosity of Mr. McKechnie's performance in *L'Aiglon*, my own prize for the week's best piece of acting goes to Vivienne Chatterton, who brought tears to my eyes in a remarkably sustained little drama, *The Nurse's Tale*, which formed part of the current series, "Mystery and Imagination." Her management of *crescendo* was perfect.

The note of real (as distinct from artistic) tragedy is seldom heard on the air, but it stood powerfully out of the talk on "Solitary Confinement." This account

of what it was like to be an English prisoner of the Gestapo was magnificently poignant. Like Winston Churchill, Christopher Burney broke all the broadcasting rules, but scored through sheer tension and sincerity. The talk came to an end at the point where Mr. Burney was haled off to Buchenwald. Doubtless we have had enough of the physical details of such places; but an account of the spiritual experience involved, from so eloquent a self-observer as this, would be of the highest interest—if he could bear to give it.

Very high marks to Mrs. Pain for the courage and success with which she tackled the subject of Love. This programme was extremely serious, unembarrassing in its style, and eminently sensible in its conclusions. The acting of Peggy Bryan was quiet and sincere, always this side of caricature. Only the psychologist seemed to me unplausible: surely no reputable practitioner in this field would refer to sexual passion as necessarily "neurotic."

Those who can capture the West of England wavelength without distortion are strongly advised to pay attention to a series of talks in course of being broadcast every Sunday in the Home Service at 10.38 p.m. These consist in illustrated accounts of famous writers born in the West, and the three programmes already given speak very well for the judgment of the editor. I enjoyed particularly A. L. Rowse's talk on Richard Carew. Future figures to be discussed include John Locke, Southey, Coleridge, Praed, Trollope and W. H. Hudson.

RECOMMENDATIONS.—*January* 20th. New Records (12.15 p.m.); Mrs. C. R. Attlee (1.10 p.m.); "They" (7 p.m.); Time for Verse (10.38 p.m.).

January 21*st*. The Dark Tower (MacNeice and Britten, 9.15 p.m.).

January 22*nd*. Nature Parliament (5.30 p.m.); Clifford Curzon (10.15 p.m.).

January 23*rd*. Symphony Concert (7 p.m.); There is no Future in it (Murder, L.P. 9.30 p.m.); The Town Major of Miraucourt (10 p.m.); Paris Night Club (L.P. 10.10 p.m.).

January 25*th*. Autobiography of a Super Tramp (L.P. 10 a.m.); Making of a Poem (*The Prelude*, 11.30 p.m.). EDWARD SACKVILLE WEST

THE MOVIES

"Forever in Love," at Warner's

This film was originally called *Pride of the Marines;* unfortunately to some extent the new title suits almost as well. Uneven story of a truculent factory hand (John Garfield) who goes off Jap-hunting as he used to go pheasant-shooting and after an heroic action in Guadalcanal loses the sight of both eyes. Then he is awkward about going back to his girl. *Forever in Love* has genuine moments in its first half—"Where's Pearl Harbour?" asks someone casually when the news comes through—and the Guadalcanal sequences are admirable; but with blindness and return the film wanders off tipsily into rhetoric. Striking performance by Garfield, who deserves a part that is good all through.

In response to something I wrote, a sympathetic American has sent me a batch of *New Yorkers*. I turned to the entertainments guide—more art and music, more film revivals, fewer plays, than we have in London. On October 20th, 1945, New Yorkers had the choice of ten recommendable new films, including *Love on the Dole*, just arrived, and of some twenty-five revivals. But the *New Yorkers* critic is not such an enthusiast as this may suggest; during a couple of months the only films he really seems to have enjoyed were *Love on the Dole* and *The True Glory*. His dislikes are expressed with an astringency that makes one wonder at times whether he wouldn't rather keep away from cinemas altogether. Possibly the glamour-struck audiences, a degree more warped than our own, provoke him.

My general impression, notwithstanding, is that New York offers filmgoers a wider variety of good films than does London to-day, and the same, if one is to judge from copies of the Paris weekly, *Spectateur* appears to be true of Paris. A glance at the cinema columns of the *Star* or the *Evening Standard* may seem depressingly regimented. There are, of course, revivals, but not very many of them; the circuits give us a choice between three or four films which are usually second-rate. Will the independent cinema get shouldered out like the "free" public house? I hope not, however benevolently inclined Mr. Rank and his rivals or associates may be. He intends to show the Cocteau film when the Curzon reopens in February—good. He intends also to distribute with English titles and, in some cases, apparently, with English soundtrack French films which have hitherto been confined to a small audience. Suppose the results aren't particularly happy, and people don't take to them—what then? We go back, I imagine, to where we started. But suppose—and this is far more disturbing—that the Rank policy succeeds, that after a time *every* French film has to go through the sausage machine of being anglicised before we are allowed to see it? I must confess that the possibility—it is no more than that—alarms me. The titles of *La Femme du Boulanger* and of *La Kermesse Héroique* appeared, I notice, in the *New Yorker* as *The Baker's Wife* and *Carnival in Flanders*. How much tampering with the original that implies I can't, of course, say. *L'Eternel Retour* is to be ominously renamed *Love Eternal* when it appears at the Curzon. WILLIAM WHITEBAIT

THREE SHOWS

THE Leicester Galleries are holding a Memorial Exhibition of paintings and drawings by Lucien Pissarro. At first glance the general impression may be of a certain uniformity, because most of the paintings are in the same tonality, the prevalence of pale greens and pinks blending into a silvery shimmer. A close examination reveals that each of these pictures—they have obviously been selected with care—possesses a very distinct character. Lucien Pissarro, like his father, was temperamentally averse from emphasis. (May I ask the theorists who pretend that Jewish art is different from Gentile to explain in what respect the work of the two Pissarros reveals their origin?) The design in these pictures is remarkably sure; it always seems deeply considered but was, I believe, spontaneous. The usual mood expressed is a serene responsiveness to the sensuous beauty of light playing upon landscape. But there are two deeply felt portraits in oils and some lively drawings of the artist's father. Some of the water-colours are particularly happy. I feel confident that almost all these paintings would prove continually agreeable to live with, indeed that the owner of one would like it better and better. The early picture of a road at Epping and *Snow in Kew Gardens* are specially striking. Altogether this exhibition confirms the high reputation Lucien Pissarro so long enjoyed among his fellow-artists.

The Army Education Corps have organised on behalf of St. Dunstan's a show of paintings by soldiers at Queen Alexandra House in Brember Street, behind the Albert Hall—tactically a very bad situation, though the architectural splendours of the entrance hall deserve the attention of connoisseurs. The exhibition includes works by such well-known painters as William Scott, Leonard Appelbee and Julian Trevelyan. Among the artists unfamiliar to me I was interested in the work of D. Graham, J. M. Grimes, D. W. Reed, C. Goldschmidt, J. Hiskock, H. Boulton, and M. Chance. One section of the show is given to paintings by men with no previous experience, one of whom has painted a Still Life of a Guitar with a Jug which strikes me as one of the best things in the whole exhibition. The sculpture on the other hand is of a lowness which makes its appearance in public quite pointless.

At the Rowland, Browse, and Delbanco Gallery there are drawings by Michael Ayrton. I read his art-criticism with all the more interest because I so usually disagree with his judgments. Painters who write about pictures have many advantages over mere critics like myself, but their taste is liable to be more narrow, because they are so much influenced by the character of their own creative intentions. As a critic Mr. Ayrton is in revolt against the pictorial hegemony of Paris, and as a painter he is a neo-romantic looking back not to Delacroix but to Samuel Palmer. While his drawing seems to me less accomplished than his writing, he invents landscapes of considerable charm.

ROGER MARVELL

Correspondence

GERMAN TRADE UNIONISM

SIR,—When we visited Germany and met German Trade Union leaders it was to examine the facts, and then to express our views on what we found, and not anything imaginary. And, of course, we went with certain experiences of years spent in the British Trade Union Movement, plus a knowledge of what, before 1914, we simple, trusting Britishers used to be told of that supposedly wonderful organisation, the German Trade Union Movement. Then again there was ever before us the known fact of the German movement from 1919 till it was snuffed out in 1933.

With that background we reached certain conclusions that the Germans do not agree with, and according to your correspondent, we should not tell them. We are not concerned whether the Germans take our advice or not, maybe they might learn something some day of those who have passed through democratic methods.

Take the mining industry: how is it possible to have a Trade Union working and taking part in measures for the well-being of those employed in that industry except through an organisation that exists for that purpose? To me, it is fantastic to believe that the miners in Germany if they wish to function, to perform something useful for those employed in the industry, can do it on any other basis except in an organisation that exists for that purpose. And that, in my view, cannot be done except along the lines that the miners have adopted practically everywhere else in the world.

That is the simple issue, and if we believe it why should we not say it, even unto the Germans? Surely, if there be a section of the working-class, who, at least, can learn something from other countries, it is the Germans.

If, however, they have to go their own way, then that is their business. But one thing is sure and certain, and it is the further fact that it will be a long time before the heel-clicking, saluting, authority-ridden Germans are forgotten by those they oppressed and tyrannised over for so long.

WILL LAWTHER

SARAWAK

SIR,—The article which you published under the title "Sarawak—Test Case" cannot be allowed to pass without comment. If the facts given in it were accurate, then there would indeed be a case for serious concern, for it would seem that the policy of the Colonial Office, under Labour Ministers, was one of arriving at a "clandestine settlement" in Sarawak purely for purposes of Far Eastern strategy, and with no relation to the interests of the people of the territory. It would appear to contradict the general tendency of the work of the Colonial Office under Labour Control, but this is not the case in fact.

Up to 1941, Sarawak was under paternal rule which, within its limits, was reasonably good, but the glowing picture painted by Prof. Le Gros Clark is surely overdrawn. It is true that there was no debt, and that trade was in a healthy state, but there were no arterial roads or railways, and, after a hundred years, there were 84 miles of roads, all round Kuching. The *Statesman's Year Book* gives the main sources of Government revenue as "Government opium monopoly, gambling, arrack and pawn farms, royalty on oil, land revenue, timber royalty, exemption tax from the Malays, Dyak and Kayan revenue." The list speaks for itself. In addition, the article takes no account of the vested interests such as Sarawak Oilfields, Ltd., which are no doubt keen to preserve their field of operations undisturbed. The Colonial Office, on the other hand, aims at the integration of Sarawak in a Malayan Union, and the development of the whole area, including the more backward and most exploited sections of its population, towards eventual self-government.

Prof. Le Gros Clark cites the Constitution of 1941 as a move towards "democratic independence," and says that it "formulated and codified what in fact had been the administrative procedure for many years" yet the preamble to the Constitution refers to it as "terminating for ever the Era of Autocratic

Rule which has so far characterised our Government." The same discrepancy can be observed in the article's description of this Constitution. It provides for a Supreme Council and a legislative body (Council Negri). This Council Negri, which Prof. Le Gros Clark describes as "a relatively large body containing a majority of Asiatic members elected from among the native chiefs and district heads," will consist, in the words of the Constitution, of "25 members, 14 of whom shall be official members appointed from the Sarawak Civil Service, and 11 of whom shall be unofficial members representative as far as practicable of the several peoples dwelling within the State and of their various interests." Nine of the official members will sit *ex-officio*, while the other five will be appointed by the Rajah in Council. The unofficial members, far from being elected, will be "appointed by the Rajah in Council." The Supreme Council, with whose advice and consent the Rajah undertook to act, was to consist of "not less than five members, a majority of whom shall be members of the Sarawak Civil Service, and a majority of whom shall be members of the Council Negri." As Prof. Le Gros Clark says, this Constitution is "quite remarkable," but hardly for "the democratic nature of the administration which it finally ensured."

Britain already has control of Sarawak's foreign relations and is responsible for its defence. It would certainly be much more beneficial to the people of Sarawak to become part of the proposed Malayan Union, provided that a policy of democratic development is pursued there, than to remain isolated under the sort of administration for which this constitution provides. Even if Prof. Le Gros Clark disagrees with this policy, he should at least correct his facts before he launches so vicious an attack on the Colonial Office.

FREDERICK W. SKINNARD

House of Commons

"JOLLY OLD EMPIRE"

SIR,—Can Herbert Morrison really have said, when interpreting Labour Party policy to an American press conference, "We are great friends of the jolly old Empire and are going to stick to it"! So *The Times* report has it, to our dismay. We, as representing the only organisation attached to the Labour Party which is specially devoted to work on colonial affairs, emphatically dissociate ourselves from viewing the Empire as a "jolly old" place, or from any intention whatsoever of "sticking to it." In saying this, we feel sure that we voice the opinion of almost everyone in the Labour Movement who has ever given any thought to the subject. The whole policy of the Colonial Office under the Labour Government is directed towards achieving self-government as rapidly as possible in all Colonies. Within the last few months Burma and Ceylon have been put far on the path to Dominion Status, and once that is achieved they will be as free to vote themselves out of the Empire as Eire has been. This is the pattern of progress at which we are aiming everywhere. It makes a travesty of our work, a mockery of our sincerity, and a hypocrisy of our professions, if the policy of the Labour Party is to be judged by these irresponsible words of Herbert Morrison. We hope Mr. Morrison will find the opportunity of putting the world right on this speech of his, and not undermining the backbreaking work the rest of us are putting in, in order to convince millions of hostile and suspicious Indians and Africans that we are not all hypocrites and liars.

J. F. HORRABIN (Chairman)
RITA HINDEN (Secretary)
Fabian Colonial Bureau
11 Dartmouth St., S.W.1.

ITALY

SIR,—It seems that I have provoked a warm and cosy little correspondence on this subject. Mr. Zilliacus puts me down as politically illiterate: Mr. Celner as a "psychological" case, desiring a "gorgeous luxury flat and a sophisticated mistress"—Heavens! what are we to do with the multitude of these "psychological" cases provided by human nature? Suppress them, I suppose.

Am I politically illiterate? Probably I am. Did I say that politics have *nothing* to do with life—if so, I retract, because they interfere with it damnably just now. I did say that "there is life as well as politics." Politics cannot (as yet) control, thank God, the enjoyment of beauty, falling in love, friendship, birth and death, a belief in God, moral, mental and physical differences, and other human weaknesses. When I look back at my own fatuous high hopes of the past, whether working for the League of Nations, Dr. Nansen and his refugees, the first Labour Government, the B.B.C., the Government of India, the Ministry of Food, the Allied Control Commission, I cannot help feeling that I have wasted far too much time on politics, with small result. I dare say I am politically stupid: yet, in these twenty-five years, I have not noticed political erudition contributing overmuch to peace, the betterment of mankind, or even wisdom.

The political erudition of Mr. Zilliacus, which I do not doubt, seems to focus on Mr. Noel-Baker and on Fascism. Let me say this. Mussolini and his *Fascio* had, in 1919, a programme identical with that of Labour to-day. (This, and other interesting parallels, can be found in Salvemini's *Fascist Dictatorship*.) The bogy of Bolshevism, plus widespread unrest, provoked them into wild counter-revolution. Mussolini, though he did much for his country, was a man who could be idiotic enough to think and even declare that "violence is moral": a motto adopted by millions in the last six years, and still held by tens of thousands in every country. Italy in 1919 was a boastful, victorious country, fretting over Versailles, conditioned by war to desire power: Italy in 1945 is a beaten, despoiled, derided, ruined country hoping for clemency, and not forgetting the painful experiences of dictatorship. The Left is in the ascendant, and will probably, by constitutional methods and in a quiet way, prevail. But if we back it in a totally totalitarian manner as conquerors, we shall ensure the violent reaction of the Right. Therefore I say, leave it alone. And I must add this. If Mussolini had come in on our side, as we begged him to do, we should now be exalting Fascism just as we exalt another "ism" which has, as we perfectly well know, been responsible for far greater atrocities and limitations of freedom than Fascism ever has.

To Mr. Celner, I can but say, apologetically, that I want to be happy. I can't prove that I don't want a luxury flat and a sophisticated mistress (they *do* sound rather nice). I should, I fear, abominate the "bracing task of building . . . a new democracy of full employment and economic justice." These are catchwords of our wartime Mr. Puffs, and I think they are myths: very dull ones, too. Just as, according to the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION (if I understood him correctly on the Brains Trust), absolute beauty is a fashion and a myth. We don't want "full employment": what we want is, with the help of the machine, full leisure to enjoy and understand life. As for "economic justice," we shall never get it until all human beings are saints: in the meanwhile, as Mr. Bernard Shaw has recently said, we can't escape the natural division between the cultured man and the artisan. The diversities of human beings, like faces and finger prints, are so indelibly, infallibly and delightfully marked by nature that no political erudition will, I trust, remove them. If it did, we should all be machines.

Lastly, to return to our particular sheep, may I suggest that Italy is not exclusively, as Mr. Celner's experience seems to suggest, a country of luxury flats and sophisticated mistresses. It is also a very poor country where lack of food, fuel, clothes, shoes, transport and houses, still does not deny intellectual gaiety, the appreciation of beauty, and even the toleration of leisure. Perhaps, in Mr. Zilliacus' own words, it is a "brilliant intellectual remaining

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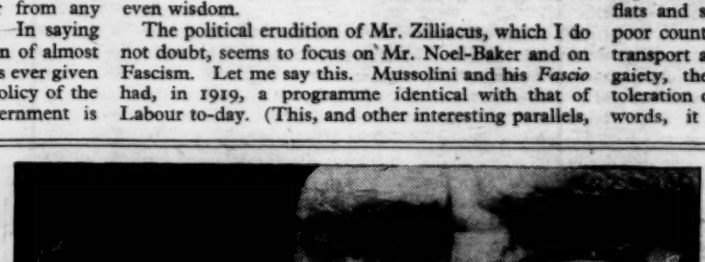

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politically illiterate." How pleasant and refreshing, in contrast to that "bracing task" of running after power which Mr. Celner advocates! Italy, even if her women are "less virtuous" (how does he know!—and what a charming example of the Puff Collusive!) than ours, still knows how to live and love and laugh. I like that so much better than political erudition.

LIONEL FIELDEN

55 Park Lane, London.

BUREAUCRATIC IRRELEVANCE

SIR,—Mr. Reginald Reynolds takes his amusing examples of Whitehall wisdom from the Ministry of Food and the Admiralty. I feel I must leave the Admiralty alone (a triumph of *esprit de corps* over almost irresistible temptation) but I can offer examples from the Board of Trade and the Post Office.

(1) My application form for utility furniture dockets asks me to state the age of my wife. Not my age. Just hers.

(2) Some months ago I applied to the Post Office to have certain Savings Certificates transferred from one member of my family to another. In due course the application was approved but I am still puzzling over a postcript to the Director of Savings' final letter. Sometimes I think I understand it—and then I begin to wonder, the fog descends and I am lost. I can only assume that, in some way or other, I am being attacked; but why? This, in copperplate writing, was the postcript:—

> I should perhaps explain that a Form N.S. 691, asking that the Certificates to be transferred be forwarded to this Department together with the completed Forms and a remittance of 1*s.* in payment of the prescribed fee and also for a statement of all Certificates already held by the proposed transferee to be furnished on the Form N.S. 683, was forwarded on the 7th June, together with Forms N.S.664 and N.S.683.

As a somewhat irrelevant tailpiece, I cannot help mentioning the case of a relative who applied for a teaching post in the West Indies. One question on the application form was: "Are you addicted to drink?"

DOUGLAS CLARK

R.N.V.R.

COMPENSATION

SIR,—"Stockbroker's" remarks do not invalidate my criticism of the compensation for Bank of England stockholders. The relevant part of my argument was that "the guarantee of equal income from public funds invariably and necessarily inflates the compensation of shareholders beyond the market value of their property." It is quite correct, as "Stockbroker" does, to compare Bank Stock with 3 per cent. Local Loans, but the crux of the comparison lies in the fact that Local Loans can be repaid at any time after one month's notice. They do not, therefore, include any guarantee of a long-term income which the Government is generously giving the Bank's ex-stockholders for the next twenty years. When the terms were announced, Bank Stock stood somewhat below parity with Local Loans, while to-day it is many points above parity.

The rise in Bank Stock since the beginning of October (when it had practically recovered from the shock of the General Election, but before publication of the Bank Bill) far exceeds even that of Old Consols, although every stockbroker knows that the latter have been driven up unduly by a purely speculative exploitation of the Government's cheap money policy. During the last three months of 1945 Bank Stock rose by 4.5 per cent., Old Consols 3.3 per cent., Local Loans and 3½ per cent. Conversion (1961) by 0.3 per cent. each.

"Stockbroker" estimates that the price of Bank Stock "even if the election had never taken place," would now be about 390; but after the advent of a Labour Government and the nationalisation of the Bank the quotation for December 31st, 1945, was actually 398. I would not admit for a moment that an increase in price produced by market reactions to the Government's cheap money policy would form a proper subject for compensation; otherwise the public might lose more on the swings of inflated capital values than it would gain on the roundabouts of lower interest rates. (This is a fundamentally important fact in calculating the number of years purchase in the compensation of other interests, and it is devoutly to be hoped that the arbitrators on mining compensation will banish from their minds the fact that the dividends of the Bank's stockholders are being bought for the British public at 32 years' purchase.) But when all is said and done, how does "Stockbroker" account for the difference between his estimate and the actual quotation?

These details may appear dry to those who justly sympathise with the Government's decision to push on quickly with nationalisation, but who do not appreciate the fact that compensation terms are the clearest reflection of the relations of power between the Labour Government and the vested interests; but they are of vital political importance.

ACCOUNTANT

FASCISM AND THE LAW

SIR,—I believe that the law of sedition could be used against those "who preach class war" (*sic*) though there are technical reasons which make it more difficult than to use it against Fascists. "Capitalists" and "workers" are categories of H.M.'s subjects rather more difficult to identify or define than are "Jews."

Be that as it may, I have little doubt that the Common Law could be so used were there, in fact, popular support for such a use. My fear is that well-intentioned Socialists will refrain from using existing machinery and delay in constructing new legal machinery for suppressing Fascism in the fear, on the one hand, that they will create a precedent which may be used against themselves, and on the other by a desire to create machinery which cannot be used against themselves. In this lies, I believe, a very dangerous error.

If reaction ever again stampeded the mass of the voters and achieved power, it would undoubtedly use existing legal machinery against its adversaries and where such was defective it would call into being new powers, as it did in 1927.

To one whose mind is still obscured by reactionary propaganda against "the Reds," the threat of renascent Fascism will appear unreal, and the demand to use the power of the State against it illiberal if not vindictive. In equating the militant Left to the Fascists, Mr. Simcox shows himself to be as politically naïve as he is distinguished in other spheres.

Inner Temple. PETER EVANS

SHOCK TACTICS

SIR,—Even if Mr. T. C. Worsley dislikes my book and its method of presentation he should not write of its "provoking title" without trying to figure out what the words "Hearts, not Heads" mean. I tried to make clear the point that if the emotions are free the intellect will look after itself, thus giving Hearts priority, just as the average school prospectus, State or private, gives Heads priority. One doesn't expect Harry Pollitt to write a book entitled *Communism plus Capitalism*. I question whether the truth is reached by the man who claims to see both sides; better when each enthusiast sticks to his own case, leaving it to the other fellow to take the other side. Mr. Worsley seems to think that I am out to shock. He flatters me, for I have the apparently silly belief that nowadays only diehards who never read my books are shockable. I am sure that Mr. Worsley isn't in that class, although I wonder what class he belongs to when he is doubtful of my "negative attitude to authority." Or, alarming thought, have I failed completely to show that a self-governing school is full of authority, an authority that sincerely tries to balance the rights of individual and community? If so I do hope that my good critic will come down and spend a week-end with the only authority that should matter—the community.

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BOOKS IN GENERAL

It is the revelation of the author's character that usually makes the chief interest of autobiographical writing; and this is apt to make the critic's task embarrassing, when the self-portrait he has to consider is published in the lifetime of its subject. But presumably if a man thus offers for our inspection an account of his conduct, thoughts and feelings, he wishes, or at least is prepared, to hear these discussed with candour. Let me then, in my attempt to sketch the characters of Canon Deane, Mr. Douglas Goldring and Mr. Siegfried Sassoon,* write with something of the freedom I should use in considering Sydney Smith or Leigh Hunt or Southey.

My three sitters, in many respects so contrasting in character, are all professional writers. (Canon Deane can fairly be so described since he has published some thirty books besides much miscellaneous writing.) They are also all men of good will: Canon Deane might be defined as a blinkered idealist, Mr. Goldring as an embittered idealist, Mr. Sassoon as a mellowed idealist.

Anthony Deane was born in 1870, the son of a regular soldier who had become a successful barrister. An education at Wellington and Clare, a vocation to Holy Orders, a talent for writing neat verse and lucid prose, an equal talent for social intercourse, which made his intercourse with authors no less spontaneous than his respect for the Royal Family—the wonder is not that he became a Canon of Windsor but that he did not attain a bishopric or at least the Deanery of Westminster. Ranging with equal success between "Fourth Leaders" for *The Times* and *How to Enjoy the Bible*, between verses for *Punch* and *Rabboni*, he supplemented the income from his successive livings. Fortunate moreover in his marriage, his health, and his taste for cricket, lawn-tennis, golf, trout-fishing and chess, Canon Deane has had both the opportunity and the good sense to enjoy life.

He seems to have been agitated by doubts neither about the doctrines of the Church nor about the structure of society. Spiritually he belongs to the Edwardian Age, that confident interlude between Victorian misgivings and inter-war irreverences. When he has come across disquieting ideas, he has contrived to disregard them. It is characteristic that he delivered in a Dorset church a centenary address upon Thomas Hardy. What agility an ecclesiastic must command to celebrate from the pulpit so open an enemy of God! Might not skating on thin ice be added to the list of the Canon's pastimes? If he has ever come across any unpleasant men and women, he never mentions them. Or else he turned a Nelson eye to their defects. (He tells us that he "loved" one man, whom I consider the most unlovable person I have ever had much to do with.)

Doubtless on some subjects he feels more violently than he discloses: such discretion would be consonant with the type he represents. Safe, that is to say conservative but not intolerantly so, alike in theology, politics and taste; conscientious, humane, practical, sensible; an empiricist, not to say a pragmatist; the product of peace, prosperity, a temperate climate and a strict education: this very common type of Englishman excites the impatience of his more logical or more impassioned fellow-countrymen by the ease with which he evades crucial issues, emitting humour as a squid emits ink. But such temperaments have been important here in every age, they abound in every class; and they provide the ballast on which our successful voyage through the centuries has largely depended.

Mr. Goldring is passionately aware of everything from which the Canon averts his eye—the wickedness of the powerful, the suffering of the oppressed, the importance of art, the exigencies of the flesh, the prevalence of neurosis. Compared with him, the Canon seems as insular and innocent as a curate in a farce. According to the blurb Mr. Goldring "gives a detached and critical view of that fantastic period, the post-war world of the 1920's." Such a view would be uncommonly interesting, for the period was not only "fantastic," but rich in vitality, experiment and hope. This is a fact to which we must not let ourselves be blinded by the disillusionment brought by the slump, the ignominious collapse of the Labour Government in 1931 and the whole lamentable history of the eight succeeding years. During the Twenties there was a widespread belief in both the possibility of continuing peace and the desirability of pleasure—a more valuable frame of mind, I suggest, than our present pessimism and masochism. A corresponding liveliness prevailed in the aesthetic realm. Literature, painting, architecture, drama, music, (and do not let us forget ballet, which most happily married the other arts)—in every province of the arts outstanding talents were coming to maturity. Paris, London, even Berlin, provided lavish evidence of man's ability to devise and appreciate the finer pleasures. As a survivor from that period I am tempted to echo Wordsworth's "Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive, But to be young was very heaven!"

Unfortunately Mr. Goldring's book falls far short of the promise in the blurb. It is anything but "detached," and we can hardly see the promised view, so prominent in the foreground is the author, menacing us with objurgations like Hosea or Habakkuk. His book ends by being more a self-portrait than a picture of an age. This is the more regrettable because he knew many of the most significant figures of the time, and has much of interest to say about them. E. D. Morel, D. H. Lawrence, Ramsay MacDonald, Norman Douglas, Aldous Huxley, Mary Butts, Wyndham Lewis and A. E. Housman are among the figures that Mr. Goldring describes from personal knowledge. He is a man of the Left, properly indignant at the imbecility of our policies in the Thirties. But his championship of Soviet Russia seems to me based less upon preference for an extremely systematic form of government than upon natural rebelliousness. It is not unusual in this country for men who are anarchists by temperament to proclaim a paradoxical sympathy with Communism, only because their environment is capitalist. If they were Soviet citizens, their temperament would drive them into some form of "deviationism." Anarchism is a very likeable doctrine, and if I suggest that Mr. Goldring is tinged with it, this is the opposite of a reproach. In any case he is by nature a revolutionary: he is in arms against what exists. And goodness knows the Governments of MacDonald, Baldwin, and Chamberlain offered cause enough for rancour! An unhappy marriage, an uncertain income, some disappointed ambitions, have filled the cup to overflowing. And it has overflowed in a bitter-tasting book.

Is it better to wear black or rose-coloured spectacles? For oneself, the latter; for the world, sometimes the former. But Mr. Goldring is often positively blinded by his. He oversimplifies many issues; he imagines wickedness where there was only weakness. Success becomes in itself a proof of guilt, all power seems to him concentrated in the hands of the ill-intentioned. Let me quote one instance out of scores: he persuades himself that *Lady into Fox* enjoyed a large sale only because its author belonged to a "literary dynasty"! Strange, how often hatred of injustice ends by making men unjust. Fanaticism as well as mildness, Swift as well as Addison, must be thought essential ingredients of the national character; and an occasional Goldring is required to bark at the flock of Deanes. In this country indeed we are more prone to smugness than to acrimony. But at the risk of seeming smug, I must decline to welcome Mr. Goldring's book, interesting as much of it is. While his values seem to me well founded, his temper is calculated to encourage Tory humorists in the delusion that among Intellectuals of the Left jaundice is a vocational disease.

Mr. Siegfried Sassoon's book has the advantage of being conspicuously well written. It is moreover rich in qualities that are even more to seek in the two others I have been discussing—objectivity, realism and balance. *Siegfried's Journey* (which took him to America and away from the Rhine) continues *The Old Century* and *The Weald of Youth*, running parallel with part of the *Memoirs of George Sherston*. It deals with the years 1916–1920, the period during which Mr. Sassoon was awkwardly discarding the chrysalis-sheath of the Fox-hunting Man to glitter in the imago of a writer. I use this metaphor because, in this country and century, it has been rare, if not impossible, to be simultaneously an athlete and an intellectual, so barbarously have we declined from the Attic ideal.

Mr. Sassoon's book includes the impressions left upon him by Thomas Hardy, Wilfred Scawen Blunt, Robert Bridges, Philip Snowden, T. E. Lawrence, Wilfred Owen, Osbert Sitwell, Ronald Firbank, Lady Ottoline Morrell and Robert Ross. His sketch of Ross is the more welcome because it disproves the calumnious account of him so irresponsibly published a few years ago by Mr. Bernard Shaw. From all these portraits, and from the brilliant description of Mr. Churchill, I should enjoy quoting long passages, did I not presume that everyone interested in 20th century letters would be sure to read the book. For Mr. Sassoon's memories of writers will remain of permanent value—they are vivid and perceptive. But the writer he describes best of all is the young poet he once was, at once delighted and embarrassed by sudden celebrity. He examines this past self with a mixture of amused detachment and avuncular affection. The account of his lecture-tour in the United States is full of good comedy: he had gone to tell the Americans that war did not pay, and banners of smoke from every factory chimney seemed to give him the lie.

Mr. Sassoon first became famous by his satires contrasting the agonies of the combatants with the patriotic fervour of civilians. With immense moral courage he at one time refused to return to the Front, believing that a war begun defensively had become unjustifiable as well as unendurable.

> I must now add that in light of subsequent events it is difficult to believe that a Peace negotiated in 1917 would have been permanent. I share the general opinion that nothing on earth would have prevented a recurrence of Teutonic aggressiveness.

A fanatical pacificist might wildly imagine that Mr. Sassoon had become bellicose because he was no longer of military age. But in fact what most differentiates him from both Canon Deane and Mr. Goldring is just this ability to evolve and to mature. I suspect that since these were undergraduates they have never been seriously tempted to modify their point of view. Mr. Sassoon on the other hand has never ceased reconsidering his conclusions. I do not for a moment mean to suggest that the old are more often right than the young. But is not the power to learn from experience a large part of wisdom?

I wish that I could persuade each of these three writers to give his opinion upon the books of the two others. Canon Deane, I fancy, would be bewildered by Mr. Goldring and Mr. Goldring indignant with Canon Deane, while both would be treated by Mr. Sassoon with benign understanding. Perhaps to become wider in one's sympathies, and consequently less censorious, is one of the few advantages that one can hope to gain, though one seldom does, from growing older.

RAYMOND MORTIMER

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COMMUNIST CHINA

The Challenge of Red China. By GUNTHER STEIN. *Pilot Press.* 15s.

Between 1936 and 1939 a certain number of foreign correspondents visited the Communist areas of China and the information the foreign public has had about these areas has largely been based on this period. From 1939 to 1944 the Communist areas were completely cut off from the rest of the world by the Kuomintang blockade and news censorship. This book is the first to be published in England giving the material obtained by the group of correspondents who were allowed to visit Yenan in 1944, after struggles with the Chungking authorities which are described in the early chapters.

Mr. Stein had been in Kuomintang China since 1939, and was, therefore, in a good position to make a comparison between the two regimes. He stayed in Yenan for four months during which he had long interviews with most of the Communist leaders, who were collecting in Yenan for the party congress, and with a fairly large sample of people in the government and army and among the general population. He also attended meetings of government bodies and visited schools, factories and farms round Yenan.

The book is largely a fairly direct record of these interviews and impressions and gives the best available account of Chinese Communist policy and the general methods of their agrarian, social, and political reforms. The fact which emerges most clearly is that many of the problems of China can be solved by a government which is willing to trust the people. Round Yenan the Communists started with an area which was one of the poorest and most primitive in China. Since 1941 they were faced with a blockade which not only cut them off from foreign products but also from such Chinese products as cotton which was normally imported from the warmer areas in the south of the province. In spite of this there had been a general rise in the standard of living, a reduction in taxation, and adequate supplies for soldiers and government employees. In the Chungking areas, on the other hand, there had been a steady deterioration in conditions, and in spite of a burden on the people so high as to produce sporadic peasant revolts in several provinces, the efficiency of most of the army and many government employees was greatly reduced by semi-starvation.

Mr. Stein brings out well the contrast between the "bureaucratic-authoritarian approach" of the Kuomintang and the Communist "approach from below." The Communists

> realised that reform and development work can be based only on the effort of the masses themselves, and the activisation of the greatest possible numbers of common people. The only way of mobilising them is to win their confidence, enthusiasm, and voluntary co-operation. And this can be done only through giving them a maximum of rights and duties by way of the development of self-government.

Many interesting examples are given of the way in which this development of self-government and popular initiative has made reforms successful, and produced a rapid growth of political consciousness and development towards democracy. Sir John Pratt, in reviewing the book, argues that, "it is necessary to preserve a sense of scale and proportion. This beautiful world has been realised only at the village level, and only if it is allowed to leaven the mass can it survive and be of value." But as nearly 90 per cent. of the population of China live in villages a sense of proportion would seem to indicate that a system which can solve the problems of the villages has only a small "mass" left to leaven.

Judging Yenan by comparison with Kuomintang areas makes Mr. Stein rather too lenient to some of its defects. For example, it is not fair to say that the "only cause" of inflation "was evidently the excessive cost of smuggled imports from Kuomintang territories." Yenan currency has been very badly managed and the Yenan dollar was worth only one-third of the dollar in the neighbouring Shansi-Suiyuan area which was equally poor, equally blockaded, and in addition suffered from regular Japanese "mopping-up campaigns." Yenan also is apt to show a very irritating tolerance towards unnecessary inefficiency. For example, some organisations used East China Time, some West China Time, and still others Yenan Local Time; and it was not till after Mr. Stein had left that a common standard was fixed. All the correspondents suffered from the favourite Yenan excuse, "This is a backward agricultural society, so you can't expect people to answer letters, to tell you about arrangements, to make roofs which don't leak," and so on. More important, he does not show the extent to which the backwardness of the local population and the concentration of party organisations produce an atmosphere dominated by the party.

It is unfortunate that the author visited only Yenan and not the other areas (a visit to the nearest big area would have meant five weeks' travelling across three Japanese blockade lines each way), because Yenan is only the extreme edge of Red China, and a picture based on Yenan is to some extent distorted. It is true that the careful reader will find that Yenan is only the capital of one of the smallest Communist areas with less than 2 per cent. of the total liberated areas population, but the book does not make it sufficiently clear that Yenan is only important because of the Communist Party and 18th Group Army headquarters and that these have only been there because of Yenan's freedom from frequent Japanese attacks. (Army headquarters was for some years in South-East Shansi and both army and party headquarters may soon move from Yenan.) The major part of the population in the liberated areas is in the coastal provinces of Hopei, Shantung, and Kiangsu and these areas have had a much higher economic, social, and cultural level than the country round Yenan. As a result the main liberated areas have had much higher standards of work than Yenan, non-Communists have played a much more important part in them, and the level of popular initiative and political consciousness is much higher. Though the regular army is under unified command the various civil governments are similar in general policy only because of common Communist leadership.

However, the account this book gives of the Yenan area provides a correct picture of the general lines of the developments going on all over Red China even though there are considerable variations in detail. Also the reports of the views of Communist leaders give a very good account of the main lines of party policy and should help to clear up the argument about how far the Chinese Communist Party is really Communist.

The book should be read by everyone interested in the present Chinese situation not only for its account of Communist policies, but also for its analysis of the general situation in parts four and five. Developments since the Japanese surrender when Japanese, puppets, and Kuomintang have co-operated closely in the civil war against the Communists have followed quite closely the possibilities suggested in the chapter entitled "Japan prepares for a come-back."

MICHAEL LINDSAY

[Mr. Lindsay was a lecturer in Pekin in 1941 and escaped through the Japanese lines into the guerilla areas. He has only recently returned to this country from Yenan.]

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VICTORS, BEWARE is a restatement of the principles and practices of liberalism, by a Spanish Liberal exiled in this country since 1937. The author believes that freedom should come before prosperity, and even before security. But he thinks that it can only be achieved within a framework of unity, and that therefore a wide grid of socialism is indispensable to the political and economic health of an otherwise liberal nation. The same principles are then applied to a study of contemporary foreign affairs.

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JONATHAN CAPE

ATOM SUB SPECIE AETERNITATIS

God and the Atom. By RONALD KNOX. *Sheed and Ward.* 7s. 6d.

The object of Ronald Knox's book is to find accommodation for the discovery and use of the atomic bomb within the religious scheme of the universe. He points out that the language and thought of science and the language and thought of religion show an ever-wider divergence, with the result that the kind of universe which religion affirms comes increasingly to be relegated to the status of a museum piece, and the language in which religion affirms it to that of an archaic tongue. Wherefore, he concludes, it is important to try to bring each fresh discovery of science into fruitful relation with what religion teaches about God.

The discovery and release of atomic energy, Father Knox considers, is hostile to religion in three ways. First, the atom seems, in respect of some at least of its characteristics, to behave in a way which is unpredictable because undetermined—a "bear point" this, for law and order at the basis of the cosmos! Secondly, men have hitherto liked to believe in a Power making for righteousness, which in spite of our manifold wickednesses would see that "it all came right in the end." Now they have no such assurance. We may blow ourselves to bits, and God, if indeed there be a God, seems to be taking no steps to stop us—a "bear point," this, for optimistic faith. Thirdly, men have liked to believe in a moral order in the universe, which underlies and determines an absolute difference between right and wrong. But a man who is required to believe (*a*) that any method of waging war, for example, dropping bombs on Hiroshima, is permissible, and (*b*) that might is a characteristic not of right but of the possession of atomic energy, is apt to grow morally sceptical. In so far as right comes into his reckoning at all, he will be inclined to say "Might is right and quite rightly." But this, if it be a moral order at all, is a very wry one.

Hence there ensues, on the plane of theory, scepticism as to the existence of God—"the new physics have fastened on us a method of thought, a recipe for organising our experience, to which a spiritual coefficient is no longer necessary"—while, on that of practice, we feel that the world is no longer subject to Providential guidance, if, indeed, it ever was. If God created the world His subsequent function in regard to it may be likened to those of the King at a Cup Final who, having kicked off, withdraws and leaves the movements of the ball to be determined by the feet of the players. So God withdraws and leaves man to be the master of his own destiny. This corollary which caused the nineteenth century to swell with pride fills us with alarm. *We* know what man is like.

The most original—some might call it the most whimsical—of Father Knox's reflections consists in an attempt to establish an analogy between the atom and the soul, in terms of which the release of the forces in the atom is represented as symbolic of the release of elements in the soul. Father Knox is impressed by the fact that atomic energy is physical energy of a new kind since it is a liberation of something which is already, so to speak, there. Hitherto physicists have been concerned to actualise energy which existed only in potentiality. One detonated an explosion; one struck a match, thus making actual a hidden possibility. It is no accident, he points out, that the word "dynamite" should be a translation of the Greek word for "potentiality." But this time we are not so much quickening a dead thing into life, as releasing an energy which is already quickened. Father Knox aptly invokes the metaphor of an elastic band; "You can use an elastic band to flick pencils about, but its primary function is to hold things together." So, too, the primary function of the energy of the atom is to hold fundamental constituents together. When the atom is split its restraining energy is let loose, with the result that it no longer holds constituents in leash but blows towns to pieces.

This release Father Knox sees as symbolic of the disintegration of human personality. The disintegrated man is not so much a single person as a number of separate impulses, each of which assumes the helm in turn and deflects the rudder of his being. Get rid of the restraining energy which unifies a man, and the mind becomes "a kingdom of its own, or, rather, an anarchy of its own." Now, there is no restraining principle within us; we can be restrained only from without, by loyalty to a cause, by conviction of a truth, by love or admiration of a person, or even by the discipline of ambition. But these sources of restraint which lie outside ourselves yet within the natural order are exposed to two disadvantages; they operate only over a certain limited field of action and their effect is temporary. They restrain us, that is to say, only for so long as our enthusiasm lasts. In the last resort only the positive force of religion can fulfil the office of holding together the diverse elements of our personality and of fusing them into a single whole. Religion alone can rescue us from chaos and give us freedom.

Such, in brief, is the argument, an argument which sees in the release of atomic energy and the chaos which results a symbol in the natural world of our emancipation from the bonds of religion and the resultant anarchy of morals in the spiritual world.

The argument is developed with all the verbal felicity with which Father Knox has for so long indulged us that we have come to expect it as our right. What, for example, could be apter than the following simile for conveying the familiar philosophical view that the principles of order and regularity in nature are not found there but are imposed upon nature *a priori* by ourselves. "The feast of reason to which philosophy invited us was (if the crudeness of the metaphor may be allowed) only a bottle party." Yet the argument is not always as clear cut or the reasoning as tidy as one could wish. Thus, although Chapter III purports to refer to the five Thomist "proofs" for God as the Creator of the world, I can find mention of only four of them, namely the "proofs" from causation, from persistence through change, from necessity and from order.

In general I find it difficult to believe that the discovery of atomic energy has really modified the cosmic situation. To increase man's power does not either (*a*) increase or diminish his wickedness, or (*b*) increase or diminish his reasons for believing in God or (*c*) his need of God. The effect is broadly that of doubling at bridge; the game is played for higher stakes but it is the same game. As Father Knox himself says, "It is a dangerous business at any time, this offer to interpret the mood of a moment." One might add that to see every development *sub specie aeternitatis* is to run the risk of eternity's dissent. This is dangerous since eternity even more surely than posterity has the last word.

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or plaque to walk nearer; at a yard or so its tiny lettering can be read, title and author in the same size as the publisher; and the date at the foot—1845, surely? No, there weren't dust-jackets then. Peel off the jacket; and the shiny granular red suggests—good heavens!—shorthand manuals, a thesis from Calcutta. One's alarm is given a new direction by the stick-on panel, hinting at winners of the Newdigate. Inside . . . once inside, we forget the book as an *objet* and begin reading. Henley-on-Thames: from a house-boat the poet surveys the sunny reaches, the ripples that slowly flap against the boat's side and "flop away in gems."

> In mud and elder-scented shade
> A reach away the breach is made
> By dive and shout
> That circles out
> To Henley Tower and Town;
> And "boats for hire" the rafters ring,
> And pink on white the roses cling,
> And red the bright geraniums swing
> In baskets dangling down.
>
> Oh shall I see the Thames again?
> The prow-promoted gems again,
> As beefy A.T.S.
> Without their hats
> Come shouting through the bridge?
> And "cheerioh" or "cheeri-bye"
> Across the waste of waters die,
> And low the mists of evening lie
> And lightly skims the midge.

How fastidiously our dreaminess has been caught, shivered and mended again! Would Mr. Betjeman prefer his river reaches without adolescent boat-loads? I doubt it. Compare *Henley-on-Thames*, say, with Thomson's Cockney lyrics and one is immediately made aware that Mr. Betjeman commands a liveliness and a depth rare in light verse. What he writes is poetry.

> . . . And low the mists of evening lie
> And lightly skims the midge.

Here are the childhood bells that, in various guises, play through the twenty-four poems of this collection:

> Intolerably sad, profound
> St. Giles's bells are ringing round,
> They bring the slanting summer rain
> To tap the chestnut boughs again
> Whose shadowy cave of rainy leaves
> The gusty belfry-song receives.
> Intolerably sad and true,
> Victorian red and jewel blue,
> The mellow bells are ringing round
> And charge the evening light with sound.
>
> And I look motionless from bed
> On heavy trees and purple red
> And hear the midland bricks and tiles
> Throw back the bells of stone St. Giles,
> Bells, ancient now as castle walls,
> Now hard and new as pitchpine stalls
> Now full with help from ages past
> Now dull with death and hell at last.
> Swing up! and give me hope of life,
> Swing down and plunge the surgeon's knife.
> I, breathing for a moment, see
> Death wing himself away from me
> And think, as on this bed I lie,
> Is it extinction when I die? . . .

Only the title—*Before the Anæsthetic, or A Real Fright*—is comic. More often Mr. Betjeman gives us a poetry of mixed feelings. The elegant boisterousness of his *Subaltern's Love-song* will delight his admirers as certainly as it will baffle the reader with blunter tastes.

> Miss J. Hunter Dunn, Miss J. Hunter Dunn,
> Furnish'd and burnish'd by Aldershot sun,
> What strenuous singles we played after tea,
> We in the tournament—you against me.
>
> Love-thirty, love-forty, oh! weakness of joy
> The speed of a swallow, the grace of a boy,
> With carefullest carelessness, gaily you won,
> I am weak from your loveliness, Joan Hunter Dunn.
>
> Miss Joan Hunter Dunn, Miss Joan Hunter Dunn,
> How mad I am, sad I am, glad that you won.
> The warm-handled racket is back in its press,
> But my shock-headed victor, she loves me no less. . . .

There is the flavour of keepsake and cartoon, mocking, sentimental, wittily abandoned, giving to the life on our doorstep (or verandah) the charm of a mezzotint. The tennis girl has, of course, other admirers outside the fold: notably Mr. Osbert Lancaster and Miss Joyce Grenfell. One can imagine the first adding daisies to dropshots, the second retailing to us every monosyllable let fall during those rallies. But of all admirers Mr. Betjeman is both the most passionate and the most equivocal. Does he, or doesn't he, care? A very difficult question to answer. Anyway, he must have her in his album, that album in which love-sets and sunsets, chancels and ghosts and Cricklewood laundries, the morning bathe and the evening bell, nestle so surprisingly.

While the "joke" of literary fashion plays an important part in Mr. Betjeman's style, it is liable to make unwanted appearances elsewhere. The reprinted first half of Mr. Rex Warner's *Poems and Contradictions* goes back only ten years, but already here and there a grin settles on the once modish phrase.

> Let each to other be as true,
> Great Umpire of the Set,
> as eye and limb to brain of him
> who volleys at the net,

isn't, I'm afraid, meant to be funny at all. Most of the early poems are the fruits of bird-watching and of enjoying Hopkins, an influence almost as exclusive as that of Kafka on the writer's prose narrative. The new poems—a sonnet sequence on love—are less imitative but also, despite technical improvement, a good deal less interesting.

Mr. Kendon's verse journal of a year is lavish in country scenes and the drama of the seasons.

> Now for the gypsy weather, scarved and flaunted,
> Shortshrift of light, but free of a tang,
> Coloured all colours, from glass blue with frost
> (Or dew like frost) at daybreak, to the deepest
> Metallic violet-over-sulphur hearts
> Of bryony girdles with their blood-drop berries
> Slung over hedges.

Pleasant enough, but the detail doesn't set as it would in lines by Mr. Blunden or Mr. Young. "From hour to hour and day to day the weather and mood softly change, while Time, unspoken and untouchable, passes slowly behind the reader as he proceeds." Thus the blurb; which has already whispered in our ear that "the continuing narrative linking lyric with lyric is as old as earth and sun." Only in a manner of speaking, of course! But that is how the whole book, an essay in the preconceived poetical, may need to be taken: in a manner of speaking. Safe bet: if you like the blurb, you'll enjoy the book.

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BASIL BLACKWELL

on Easter Island. "Once I was invited to a Give-Away dance by some North American Indians," the voice went on, "and as I had been initiated into the tribe, I was permitted to take my place among the young bucks." Only to the Ordinary Man could such startling things occur. The Commander is Nature's innocent, opening his eyes with a boundless capacity for the pleasures of unsullied belief. The Commander has been initiated not only into tribes; he has been initiated into everything. He initiates himself into the vast secret society of human chin-wagging. "I may be told I am not scientific, but my theory is . . .": there is no hesitation in the responses of his willing nature. Thought is transferred over oceans, the sixth sense pokes its head out like a jack-in-the-box, there is more in everything than meets the eye. Dead men come to life, rats are seen leaving their sinking ships, a man's head steams after he has eaten marmalade, fakirs fake, men see their future wives in dreams, reincarnation is a busy industry—generally abroad. At the same time, try to sell the Commander a false piece of tortoiseshell; try to palm off a piece of polished pitch as real ebony; pull his leg about flying foxes; or deceive him with love, kisses and a request for his photograph when you are writing him a fan letter. It doesn't work. The Commander, like the poet, may be innocent, but in the *business* of life he is never a sucker.

The present book is a hundred pages of non-stop, unpadded, breathlessly irrelevant anecdote. I don't think I have ever read or seen so many excellent anecdotes in one book in my life. Rarely have I seen them so economically done. The Commander is never a bore. He is one of Nature's story-tellers. That points to another aspect of the Ordinary Man: he is, as M. Sartre has lugubriously told us, a story-telling animal. A story, a myth, means a hundred times more to him than a fact. One might call the Commander's book *Mankind in the Making-up*. And the Commander is not a simple story-teller: first, he startles, then he astounds, after that he complicates, adds a twist and then wriggles out. Take the stomachs of large sharks. One contained a sailor's hat. Another contained a ship's menu card. One—the best of all—contained a wallet with the photograph of a girl and some letters. End of story? Far from it. Commander Campbell carried the wallet around the world, hoping one day to meet the relatives of the deceased. End of story? Obviously, a serious temptation here attends the story-teller. Commander Campbell decides, wisely, to wriggle out: alas! he says, he was unable to fulfil the humane intention for (such are the hazards of a sailor's life) he lost the wallet when his own ship went down. Moral—for all story-tellers—leave speculation to the reader.

But he is master of many kinds of story. Some begin like Maugham and end like O. Henry. The charm of this kind of story is that, like all the stories of the Ordinary Man, it never illustrates its opening point:

> My view of the question, "Does too much dabbling in psychology by the ordinary layman tend to make him introspective and is this necessarily bad?" is that such dabbling is best avoided by the layman.
>
> Introspection may be good in some ways, but I can see the danger of self-pity creeping in. The mind feeding on self-pity, soon weakens the will and leads to an inferiority complex.
>
> I know a doctor in Melbourne who used to dabble in psychology and occultism. At his seances he used to materialise fabrics. This got to the ears of the Customs officials. The Customs sent the doctor a bill for £40 Excise duty.

Other stories trail away into rudimentary Chehov:

> I knew a clever hypnotist who used to put his wife to sleep on Friday afternoon and go down to Brighton with a friend for the week-end.
>
> Arriving home on Monday he would dehypnotise his wife who would wake and say she felt that she had slept only an hour or so and didn't feel a bit refreshed.

Or there is a Bret Harte yarn about the dead trooper in the Mounties, who walked back into the camp after he had been stabbed and buried in a grave. His "unconscious" saved him; it saves a good many of the Campbell characters. That and the fact that the soil of his grave was virgin soil. Useless to experiment in the Home Counties. There is also a Priestley–Dunne story in the man who proved he had lived in Sydney during a previous life by discovering his initials cut on the prison walls. An expert tells me, however, that one does not have the same initials in one's other lives.

Huxley may rap the Commander's knuckles, but the Ordinary Man lives by the poetry of anecdote, not by the prose of ascertainable fact. And the Commander's heart is in the right place. *His* past life did not come up before him when he was drowning: what he saw was his dear old mother and his old Irish Terrier, Hooligan. "Well," I thought, "the old dog will never hear that step again." Don't worry, many a man started life as a bootblack, spread happiness by laughter, a smile works wonders. Hard work keeps all men happy. Science or no science, the secret of health is a happy mind. If medicine bottle No. 13 is empty, give the patient a drop of No. 6, and a drop of No. 7. It adds up to the same thing, and the unconscious does the rest. There is a piece of advice for aspiring writers in this book: write 200 words every day about any object in your room. Good advice: the Commander is an excellent plain writer, never uses two words when one will do; and though this delightful book was first published in short pieces in the popular press, it keeps refreshingly clear of journalese.

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of helpful detailed photographs arranged in chronological sequence so that the reader can study his development by turning the pages. It is sad that the animal spirit of his early works—witness the "Apple Gatherers" of 1912 which Gauguin might have glanced at with approval—should later have degenerated into the clever portraits and pedestrian landscapes of the Twenties and Thirties. Once one has recovered from the initial surprise of a magnolia in full bloom or a window-box with its geranium spreading across the foreground of a composition, there is little left of interest in the treatment of clouds, fields or semi-detached villas in the background to stimulate the mind. Spencer appeals to a public that has moved one stage beyond the problem picture of the year: hence we find among the purchasers of his works eminent Royal Academicians and directors of provincial Art Galleries, none of whom are renowned for their patronage of all that is "strangest and most original" in modern painting. He is, in fact, the Academician in disguise, who finds the sophistication of the twentieth century too insistent to be ignored and yet too alien to be properly assimilated. How much more enviable was the lot of the natural primitive in England in the last century, when revolutions in scientific thought could with impunity be disregarded! And one can imagine Spencer born in Cookham in 1840, developing into a delightful minor, or even major, Pre-Raphaelite.

Two new Penguin Modern Painters, Pasmore and Burra, with the best-coloured illustrations to be found anywhere in England at the present time. Clive Bell's introduction to the Pasmore volume contains some valuable information about Pasmore's early training as an artist, but unfortunately most of it was written in the early part of the war, since when he has moved on to new and more interesting experiments. (Painters cannot be persuaded to sit still whilst they are being written about.) However, a fair selection of his recent pictures has been included among the plates, and it is useful to have a record of them in their present state before he has a chance to repaint them, as is his habit. Clive Bell concludes his introduction with the words: "I prophesy that the art of Pasmore will not stand still." Sure enough, the last four years of his career have been marked by a greater austerity of vision and a clearer understanding of the organisation of space than he has ever previously shown. This may be accounted for partly by a renewed interest in Rembrandt and Whistler, both of whom he appears to have studied closely, and partly by a more sombre attitude towards life in general; in any case Pasmore has now left far behind him the attractive flower-pieces and portraits of the Euston Road period. To observe the change that has taken place, one has only to compare a picture like the "Striped Dress" of 1939, reminiscent of the gaiety of Bonnard, with a recent painting like the "Supper at Emmaus," where the colour is more subdued, the drawing firmer and the planes more rigorously defined. The same transformation has been at work in his landscapes, as one can see by comparing the pretty scene of a lady sitting in a punt (1936-38) with the stark formalism of the "Wave," completed in 1944. Though some of his most successful pictures belong to the earlier period, he was at one time in danger of relying too much on the happy matching of colours and on the clever brush-stroke. Now he has set his sail on a new course, and those who, sometimes legitimately, accused him of too much tastefulness, who grouped him with Dufy and Marie Laurencin as the artist of the expensive boudoir, must now reconsider their too hasty judgment and recognise in Pasmore our most promising artist under forty.

John Rothenstein's Penguin on Edward Burra is also recommended to those who, like myself, were searching for an explanation of his somewhat isolated position in modern painting. Almost nothing has previously appeared about Burra in print, and here is our first opportunity to read of his strangely secluded life in the Hemingway underworld of Spain and Latin America. The satirical commentaries of Georg Grosz upon society under the Weimar Republic have achieved a documentary interest now that that epoch has ceased to be actual and become legendary. Similarly, Burra's vivid but repulsive portrayal of obscure vices achieves an additional value now that these particular forms of hedonism are to be restricted and repressed. All the same, this scarcely justifies his inclusion in so important a series. BENEDICT NICOLSON

Week-end Competitions

No. 834

Set by Sam Smiles.

Six guineas are offered for an extract in not more than 200 words from a history written in the Elysian Fields by Macaulay or Carlyle and describing the scene at the Central Hall, Westminster. Entries by January 29.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 831

Set by Raymond Mortimer

Six Guineas are offered for the best clerihews referring to styles of architecture.

Report by Raymond Mortimer

The excellence of the results has justified me in inviting, for the second time, architectural clerihews. I selected as worth printing twice as many entries as there is space for, and I feel that my first choice is rather arbitrary. About the prize-winners, however, I have little doubt: Hardy Amies, Maud Budden, L. E. J., Pibwob, Stanley J. Sharpless, and Willy Tadpole get a guinea each. I must add that Pibwob's views upon the pronunciation of *Baroque* are exactly the reverse of mine.

Philip Webb's Red House might
be called Pre-Raphaelite:
I think it's just early
Purley.

Sir Gilbert Scott—
Got wot—
Was the anointed
Sharpener of Pointed.

The Egyptian Style
Has left the Nile
for the banks
Of the Ostrers and Ranks. HARDY AMIES

Scottish Baronial
Is stylish and ceremonial,
Which the average Scot
Is not.

Of Perpendicular
Ruskin thought nothing in particular:
He liked his Gothic earlier
and curlier.

Egyptian
Beggared all description
Which made it suitable for Cleopatra
etc. MAUD BUDDEN

Doric
As applied to the Scots is metaphoric;
Who ever saw a temple built
In a kilt?

Renaissance
Kept busy sixteenth and seventeenth century masons,
As at St. Paul's, when—
But Mr. Bentley holds the copyright in Wren.

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31st *December*, 1945.

	£	£
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		1,007,951,469
Acceptances, Guarantees, Indemnities, etc., for account of Customers		14,678,163
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Reserve Fund		11,250,000
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Cash in Hand and with the Bank of England		111,690,130
Balances with other British Banks and Cheques in course of collection		37,528,121
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Bills Discounted		95,508,900
Treasury Deposit Receipts		345,000,000
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		168,523,812
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